

# I. Regional and City Context

The Oakland Estuary waterfront is a significant citywide and regional resource that connects the City of Oakland and the surrounding region to the San Francisco Bay. The Central Estuary, the focus of this study, is an area generally encompassed by 19th Ave. to the north, 54th Ave. to the south, I-880 to the east and the Oakland Estuary to the west. The Plan Area is roughly 416 acres, of which approximately 319 acres are made up of individual parcels and the remainder are public rights-of-way.



**Regional Context**  
 Central Estuary Plan Study Area

Source: Google Earth  
 April 20, 2009

CITY OF OAKLAND  
 COMMUNITY DESIGN ARCHITECTURE  
 1995 • 1997 • 2000 • 2002 • 2003 • 2004 • 2005 • 2006 • 2007 • 2008 • 2009

OAKLAND CENTRAL ESTUARY WATERFRONT SPECIFIC PLAN

The Oakland Estuary waterfront has experienced significant development interest in recent years. However, a number of physical and policy challenges, including conflicting land use priorities and essential infrastructure deficiencies, have highlighted the need for a formal and district-wide planning process. A significant citywide challenge of the last decade has been the importance of preserving a healthy diversity of employment and industry in Oakland. Historically, many industries have depended on waterfront access for raw materials or distribution, and some of the industrial uses in the Estuary Area do to this day. As a result, the area was historically predominantly zoned for industrial use, and a number of well-established industrial uses remain. In recent years, residential development interests have focused on industrial areas throughout the City because of the relative affordability of large land parcels, and the Estuary waterfront has been particularly appealing because of its attractive views and central location. At the same time, the desire to increase public access to and recreational use of the City’s waterfront adds another potentially conflicting demand on this area. The Central Estuary Plan (Plan) is intended to address these many demands by clarifying stakeholder desires and City policy for this dynamic area.

Additionally, planning for the Central Estuary is further complicated by the complexity of the area. Conditions within the Plan Area vary markedly by district. For the purposes of the Central Estuary Plan, the area has been divided into four Subareas, as delineated in the Subarea map below.



## Existing City of Oakland Plans, Policies and Regulations

Citywide policies, such as the City General Plan and zoning, as well as a number of other plans and studies that have focused on the Estuary area, define the potential future for the area. General Plan and Estuary Policy Plan (EPP) policies and current zoning districts applicable to each Subarea are further described in the Land Use and Urban Form section of this report.

### General Plan and Estuary Policy Plan

*Envision Oakland*, the City of Oakland General Plan, outlines a long-range vision for the City of Oakland. Adopted in 1998, the General Plan was designed to emphasize integration of planning, economic development, and implementation, and spur a commitment to action while serving as the ongoing policy guide regarding physical development for the City. The plan defined a number of subsequent planning efforts that would be required to complete this process and further delineate the vision for certain areas, including the waterfront in particular. A number of the Elements of the General Plan include policies and detail applicable the Central Estuary Plan Area, most notably the Estuary Policy Plan (EPP).

The Land Use and Transportation Element (LUTE) recommends that future residential growth in Oakland be targeted to areas with high transit connectivity (Transit Oriented Districts) and the waterfront, and suggests that land uses, densities, and transportation systems be planned to support increased development in these areas. It also identifies the importance of regional commercial uses in Oakland's future, and suggests the waterfront as one opportune location for these uses. A number of goals and policies related to the waterfront are elaborated in Chapter 2, Policy Framework, of the LUTE. Key goals and policies address the importance of increasing public access to the waterfront and better connecting waterfront areas to the rest of the city, integration of mixed-use development with adjacent land uses, defining the type, density, and quality of development that should be encouraged along the waterfront.

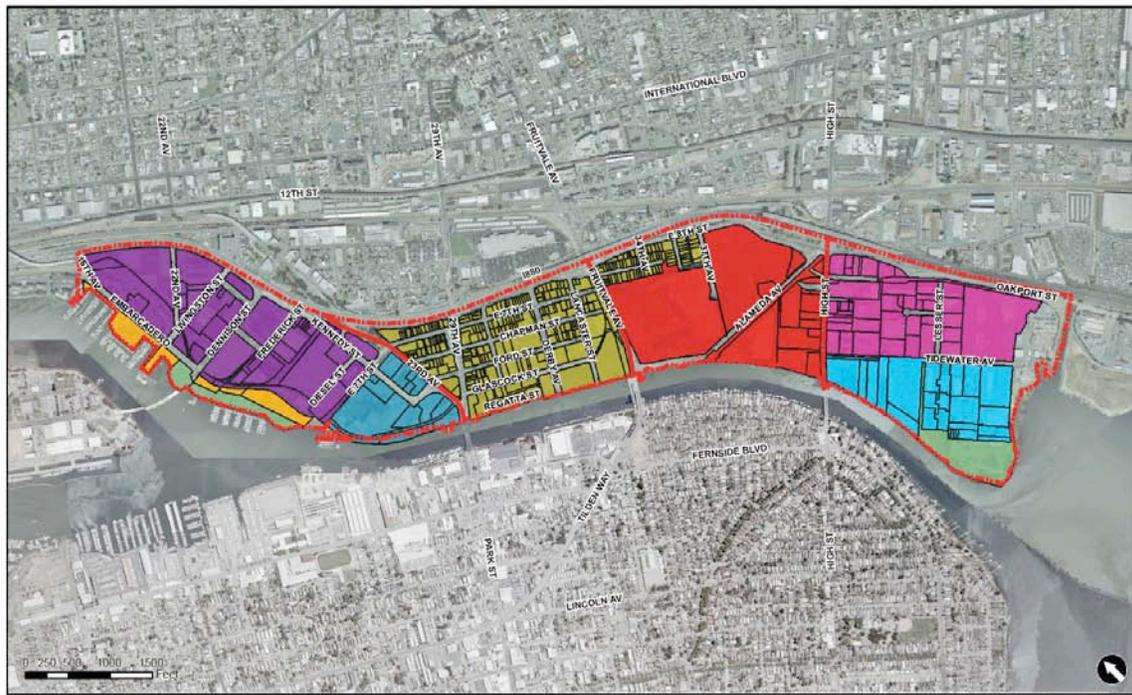
The Shoreline and Creeks section of the Open Space and Conservation and Recreation Element (OSCAR) includes policies and actions that emphasize the Jack London to High Street waterfront as an opportunity area for improved public access, recreational amenities, and land uses which capitalize on the waterfront's presence. This section recognizes two significant challenges to improving the waterfront: the tenuous balance between the importance of increasing access to the waterfront without interrupting active and essential maritime uses, and the challenge of creating linkages to bring the rest of the City to the waterfront. The section proposes the promotion of some beneficial waterfront uses, such as maritime industry, and coordinated waterfront planning in balance with the increased dedication of accessible shoreline.

Because of the long history of the Central Estuary as a vibrant industrial and residential district of the City, a number of policies of the Historic Preservation Element also apply to the area. In recent decades, large numbers of Oakland's historic properties have been allowed to deteriorate, experience adverse alterations or be demolished. The Element envisions that preservation and enhancement of significant historic properties could contribute to Oakland's economy, affordable housing stock, overall image, and quality of life. The Element also aims to clarify and revise many of the City's past historic preservation regulations that created unnecessary burdens and uncertainties for property owners and developers.

The General Plan established important general goals and policies for the waterfront and created a single broad land use designation, "Waterfront," which is applied to the entire Estuary waterfront, including the Plan Area. The EPP, adopted in June 1999, is an element of the General Plan that sets forth policies and principles to guide development in the Estuary area, refining and superseding the policy guidance for this

area contained in the City’s General Plan Land Use and Transportation Element. The EPP divided the Estuary Area into three districts: Jack London, Oak to Ninth, and San Antonio/Fruitvale. The Central Estuary Plan Area is entirely within the San Antonio Fruitvale District. The EPP also recommended nineteen unique land use designations for the Estuary Waterfront, which supersede and subdivide the broad Waterfront designation of the General Plan into more fine-grained land use areas. Nine of these designations are found in the Central Estuary Plan Area. The existing EPP land use designations for the area consist of Light Industrial, Planned Waterfront Development, Residential Mixed Use, Heavy Industrial, and General Commercial and variations thereof.

The EPP included a recommendation to prepare an “implementation guide” to provide specific strategies and standards to guide the initiation and evaluation of waterfront-related projects. This Oakland Central Estuary Plan is intended to serve as that implementation guide for the waterfront area generally bounded by I-580, 19<sup>th</sup> and 54<sup>th</sup> Avenues.



Source: City of Oakland Estuary Policy Plan 1998

**Estuary Policy Plan Land Use Designation**

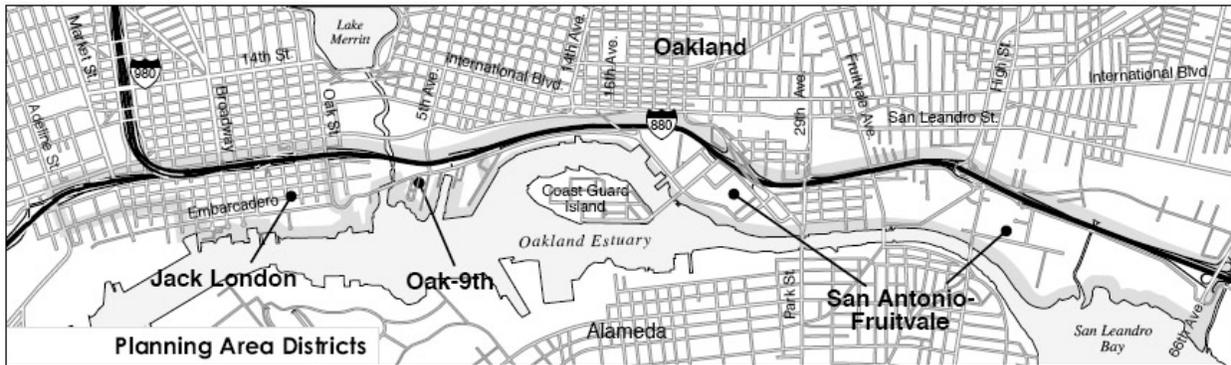
June 10, 2009

- |                                    |                                  |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Subarea Boundaries                 | Planned Waterfront Development 3 |
| Waterfront Commercial Recreation 2 | General Commercial 1             |
| Residential Mixed Use              | Light Industry 2                 |
| Planned Waterfront Development 2   | Light Industry 3                 |
|                                    | Parks                            |



Since the 1998 Estuary Policy Plan was adopted, the two other districts included in this planning effort, the Jack London District and Oak to Ninth, have undergone significant redevelopment and planning. The transformation of the Jack London district is well underway. The area is now home to a number of new residential, retail and mixed-use developments, enjoys improved waterfront access, and has become a

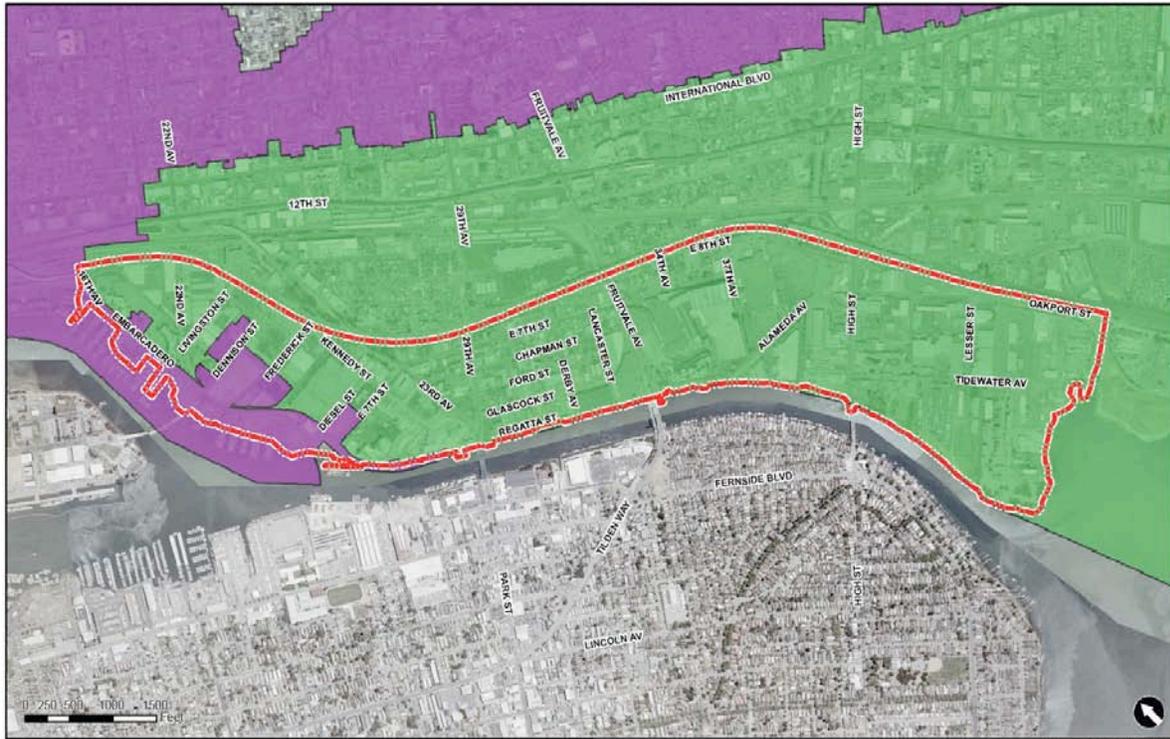
significant regional destination. Extensive planning for the Oak to Ninth district, which includes a number of industrial uses including a break bulk shipping terminal, has resulted in a formal development plan and supporting environmental documentation. The 64-acre project is envisioned as a vital pedestrian-oriented mixed-use neighborhood comprising 3,100 residential units, 200,000 square feet of ground floor commercial uses, two renovated marinas (with a total of 170 boat slips), a wetlands restoration area, and 32 acres of public waterfront parks. Amendments to the Estuary Policy Plan, the Preliminary Development Plan and environmental documentation were approved by the Oakland City Council in July 2006. As a result of a lawsuit, a revision to the analysis in the EIR was re-certified by the Oakland City Council in January 2009, which will allow this project to move forward.



Source: Estuary Policy Plan, 1998

## Redevelopment Plans

The Central Estuary Plan Area falls within the boundaries of two separate Redevelopment Areas.



### Oakland Redevelopment Areas

-  Central Estuary Plan Area Boundary
- Redevelopment Areas**
-  Central City East Redevelopment Plan
-  Coliseum Redevelopment Plan

Source: City of Oakland 2009

June 1, 2009



The plan area is primarily located within the Estuary subarea of the Coliseum Redevelopment Area. The goals of the Coliseum Redevelopment Area Plan (adopted 1995; amended through May 2007) are to stimulate business opportunities for industrial, research and development and commercial activities by improving infrastructure; provide long-term job training and employment; and enhance residents' quality of life through public safety improvements, homeownership opportunities and neighborhood revitalization efforts. Some of the specific goals include elimination of blighting influences; correction of environmental deficiencies; mitigation of inadequate or deteriorated public improvements, facilities and utilities; revitalization of stagnant and underutilized locations; reinvigoration of existing retail and industry; and involvement of the community. The plan contains a variety of proposed strategies and public improvements to help achieve these goals. Most notably, the plan provides for acquisition, management, assembly, rehabilitation, redevelopment, demolition, and/or disposition of property or structures within the plan area for uses in accordance with the plan. The plan also maintains a strong stance in favor of creating opportunities to involve area owners, tenants, and residents in the revitalization efforts and preventing resident displacement.

The May 2008 draft Blight Analysis to Support Amendment to the Coliseum Area Redevelopment Plan includes detailed blight analysis of a large number of parcels in the Central Estuary Plan Area. The blight report surveyed 295 of the 463 parcels in the Plan Area. The survey found that 49 of those parcels, or about 17%, are deteriorated or dilapidated, which is higher than the average for the Redevelopment Area as a whole. Deteriorated properties exhibit signs of wear and substandard conditions, such as faded paint; windows or roofs in poor condition; significant amounts of mold, litter, weeds, graffiti, large debris and scattered stored items (such as cars or containers) visible from outside the property. Dilapidated refers to more extreme cases of these conditions. The area also includes 67 parcels, or 22.5% of those surveyed, that exhibit public improvement deficiencies, such as lack of sidewalks or curbs/gutters, need for repaving, and/or unused rail lines.

Additionally, the blight survey considered economic forms of blight, such as depreciated or stagnant property values, underutilized property, lack of necessary commercial facilities, “problem” businesses (an excess of bars and liquor stores), and high crime rates. The study found 57 parcels (roughly 20%) exhibiting disinvestment or vacancy. The rest of the economic indicators of blight were not analyzed on a subarea basis, but are the same indicators detailed in the Public Health section of this report, Section IX.

A small portion of the Central Estuary Plan Area is located in the Central City East Redevelopment Area (CCE). The goals of the CCE Redevelopment Plan (adopted 2003; amended through May 2007) are to stimulate infill development, adaptive reuse and preservation in the study area; create new housing and employment opportunities; and improve transportation, infrastructure, open space, parking, and other public facilities in the CCE Plan Area. The CCE Plan also seeks to attract new businesses and retain existing businesses in the area, providing job training and employment opportunities for area residents. Finally, the CCE Plan seeks to stimulate home ownership opportunities in the Project Area and improve the quality of the residential environment by assisting in new construction, rehabilitation and conservation of living units in the area, including units affordable to low and moderate income households.

## **Zoning Regulations**

Much of the zoning for the Central Estuary Plan Area, largely put in place in the 1960’s, was never updated to be in conformance with the EPP land use designations. The existing zoning for the Plan Area is primarily M-40, Heavy Industrial, with a designation of HBX-3, Housing and Business Mix in the residential area known as the Kennedy Tract.

The HBX-3 zone is intended to provide development standards for areas that have a mix of industrial, heavy commercial and higher density residential development. This zone is intended to promote housing with a strong presence of commercial and industrial activities. The specific purposes of the Housing and Business Mix (HBX-3) zone are to:

- Allow for mixed use districts that recognize both residential and business activities.
- Establish development standards that allow residential and business activities to compatibly co-exist.
- Provide a transition between industrial areas and residential neighborhoods.
- Encourage development that respects environmental quality and historic patterns of development.
- Foster a variety of small, entrepreneurial, and flexible home-based businesses.

In order to bring other sections of the Estuary into compliance with the EPP and planned future development, rezoning has been necessary. For example, the Oak to 9<sup>th</sup> area was rezoned from M-40, Heavy Industrial to PWD-4, Planned Waterfront Zoning District-4 and OS-RSP, Open Space-Regional Serving Park.

The specific purposes of the Planned Waterfront Zoning District-4 are to:

- Encourage the creation of a mixed-use district that integrates a combination of residential, commercial, public open space and civic uses.
- Establish development standards that allow residential, commercial, public open space and civic activities to compatibly co-exist.
- Provide a balance of private development and public open space with convenient access to public open space and the waterfront.
- Improve access to the waterfront and recreational opportunities along the waterfront including boat launches and marinas.
- Encourage quality and variety in building and landscape design as well as compatibility in use and form.
- Encourage development that is respectful of the environmental qualities that the site has to offer.

Similar creation of appropriate zoning districts may be necessary to implement the EPP and recommendations of the Central Estuary Plan in some parts of the Plan Area.

## **Citywide Industrial Land Use Policy**

As numerous areas throughout the region and the City have converted from industrial to residential use, a relatively permanent conversion, industrial land and employment have become both increasingly scarce and increasingly important to maintaining the city's diversity. Maintaining a diversity of good jobs in Oakland is a priority for policymakers and residents, as it is key to maintaining the city's attractiveness to employers, social and economic diversity, and livability. As a result, in 2008 the City established a Citywide Industrial Land Use Policy, based on City Council direction, aimed at preserving certain industrial areas and establishing a more integrated and predictable approach to the management of industrial lands in Oakland.

Though the Industrial Land Use Policy followed and largely deferred to the Estuary Policy Plan, both provided flexible guidance on future land uses, which has resulted in conflicting opinions about how these policies might be interpreted. While the EPP suggested that many industrial areas might eventually change from industrial to other uses, such as residential or office, it also afforded the flexibility for existing industrial uses to stay and for other industrial uses to replace them. The ongoing redevelopment of the Jack London district and the planned development of Oak to 9<sup>th</sup>, as described in the discussion of the Estuary Policy Plan above, resulted in the loss of a significant amount of waterfront industrial use prior to the establishment of the Industrial Land Use Policy. The Industrial Land Use Policy respects the prescriptions of the EPP, but the policy is structured to encourage preservation of remaining industrial lands, while calling for the development of a structured basis by which to approach decisions to allow conversions to other uses. The Central Estuary Plan process is designed to develop the structured, or criteria-based, approach to making conversion decisions and to refine the EPP policies regarding which

areas should remain industrial and which areas should convert to other uses, if and when the existing industrial uses depart.



Source: City of Oakland 2009

**Industrial Land Use Policy**

June 10, 2009

-  Plan Area Boundary
- Industrial Subarea Boundaries**
-  11A
-  4



The industrial areas of the city were divided into 17 Sub-Areas for analysis purposes. The Central Estuary Plan Area is divided between Sub-Areas 4 and 11a in the recommendations of the Policy. Sub-Area 4, which falls in the Central Estuary Plan’s East Subarea, was identified in the Estuary Policy Plan as moving towards industrial business park. The Industrial Land Use Policy found that industrial uses on the upper part of High Street between Tidewater and the 1-880 will likely remain, as more intense uses including residential would further aggravate the existing traffic congestion at High Street and 880 caused by commuters crossing the High Street Bridge from the City of Alameda. The industrial blocks of Malat/Lesser Streets would be best improved with more intense and light-impact industrial uses, including enclosed warehouse facilities, as they have direct access to I- 880 to the south.

The Policy recommends that Sub-Area 11a, which includes the Central Estuary Plan’s West and Central-West Subareas, retain the core industrial uses south of Embarcadero Cove through Kennedy Tract north (Park Street Bridge) due to the importance of the area for the food production, warehousing and distribution sector, a strong and growing part of the Oakland industrial economy. It also cites the growing

presence of craftsmen and artisans in the Jingtletown/Kennedy Tract area and their growing importance in Oakland, as well as the need for the material industries that support them.

In the final 2008 report recommending the adoption of the Policy, staff recommended that the City Council not make a recommendation about the future of Sub-Area 11a or the part of Sub-Area 4 that falls within the Central Estuary Plan Area, as the Central Estuary Plan process would analyze them in depth and make recommendations regarding appropriate uses.

## **Regional and Other Agency Regulation and Planning Efforts**

### **The San Francisco Bay Trail**

One of the most significant current regional planning efforts, the creation of a continuous San Francisco Bay Trail, has many direct implications for Plan Area. The Bay Trail is intended to create not just a continuous transportation connection throughout the Bay Area, but also to provide better access to perhaps the Bay Area's greatest amenity, the San Francisco Bay waterfront. The *Oakland Waterfront Trail: Bay Trail Feasibility and Design Guidelines* (2003) includes a detailed feasibility study, site plans and design standards for development of a waterfront promenade and Bay Trail alignment along the Oakland Estuary shoreline. Significant resources were invested to develop and partially implement this plan. Construction of new parks and trail connections is on-going throughout Oakland, but is particularly pronounced within the Plan Area, as the waterfront is rapidly being transformed by new projects, as detailed under the Land Use and Urban Form chapter of this report. This Plan organizes and prioritizes the City's prior funding commitments to construct the Bay Trail, including Measure DD, the Oakland Trust for Clean Water and Safe Parks, a bond passed by voters in 2002 that is projected to provide \$53 million in funding for activities related to the development of the Bay Trail. Additionally, the Plan will complement the East Bay Regional Park District's construction of a new waterfront park at the tip of the Tidewater area.

### **ABAG/MTC FOCUS Priority Development Areas**

The Central Estuary Plan Area is part of the area of Oakland designated as a Priority Development Area (PDA) as part of the regional effort led by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to promote a more compact land use pattern for the Bay Area. PDAs are locally-identified, infill development opportunity areas where there is local commitment to developing more housing, along with amenities and services to meet the day-to-day needs of residents, in a pedestrian-friendly environment. Additionally, PDAs should be served by existing or planned fixed transit or comparable bus service. The City of Oakland has broadly identified all of the City's "Corridors & Station Areas" as a PDA, which includes the areas within one half mile radius around the BART Stations in Oakland, and the area within one quarter mile of the major transportation corridors in and along the BART system tracks and the AC Transit routes on major arterials like San Pablo Ave., Telegraph Ave., and International Blvd. that connect to regional transportation corridors. Being designated as a PDA will allow the City to pursue various incentives offered by the regional agencies to local governments for meeting PDA goals.

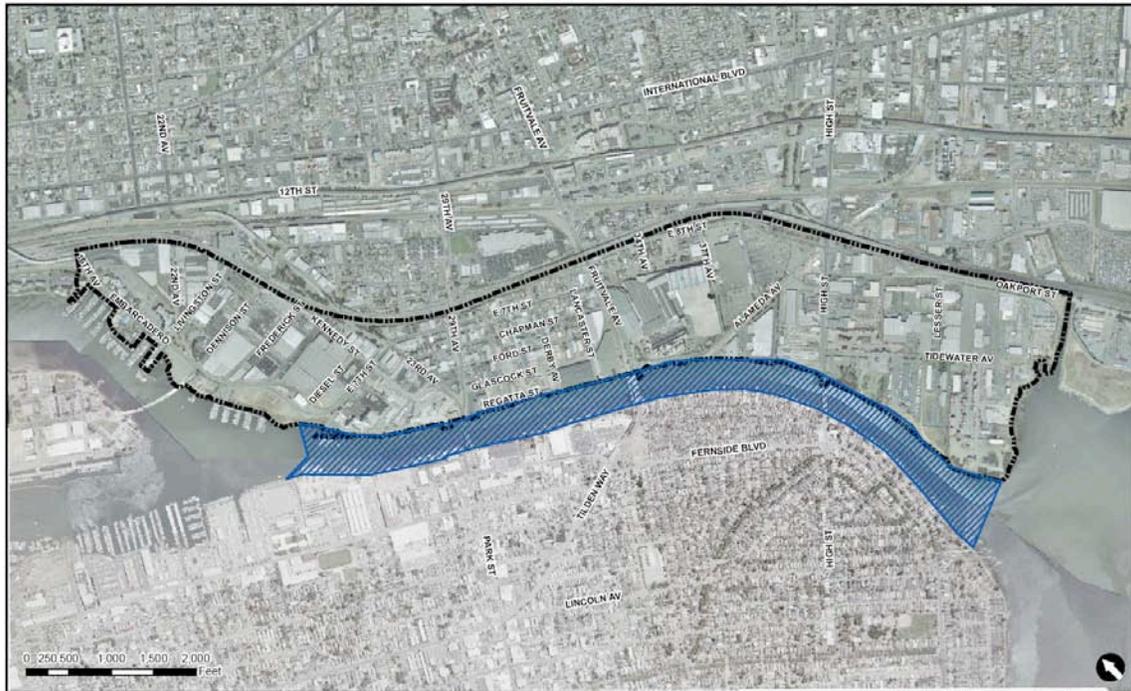
## **MTC Goods Movement/Land Use Project**

The MTC Regional Goods Movement Study (2004) found that goods movement industries play a critical role in the Bay Area’s economy. As the volume of population and business grow in the Bay Area, other land uses are displacing the infrastructure and space that the goods movement industry requires to efficiently support residents and businesses. The Goods Movement/Land Use Project (2008) followed the study with more detailed analysis and recommendations about the importance of and challenges to goods movement in the Bay Area. Efficient goods movement ensures that businesses can operate efficiently, provides goods more affordably because less transport is necessary, creates a diversity of jobs, and decreases greenhouse gas emissions because goods transport is more efficient.

The Project found that the I-880 corridor is one of the most critical corridors for goods movement supporting business in the entire Bay Area and that its foremost challenge is the need to preserve central locations along the corridor where land uses such as warehousing and distribution centers can support the goods movement industry. Additionally, the project found that the “continuing viability of industrial areas along (I-880) will be enhanced where industrial operations are separated from nearby neighborhoods and commercial districts and are located in industrial districts that accommodate truck traffic and provide relatively direct access to the freeway network.” In other words, the Project highlights the importance of maintaining and enhancing some of the industrial uses that have historically thrived and currently thrive in the Central Estuary Area, and that these areas need clear separation from residential and commercial areas to ensure that the specialized infrastructure and access needs can be efficiently met. The study cites the Plan Area as important, due to its central location, but largely at risk of conversion.

## **Army Corps of Engineers**

The Oakland Inner Harbor Tidal Canal (OIHTC), which includes areas of the Estuary to the east of Coast Guard Island, is federal property governed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Some additional waters of the Estuary not considered part of the OIHTC are still regulated by the USACE, though the federal government is not the owner. The USACE is responsible for overseeing, managing, developing and maintaining the nation's water and related environmental resources including its navigable waterways. As such, any improvements to facilities that come into contact with the Estuary, such as bridges and piers, will require the cooperation of the USACE. Docks, piers and other structures abutting from private parcels along the Estuary are considered encroachments into federal property where they stretch into the OIHTC and require permits, called Section 404 Permits, and licensing from the USACE for repair, modification, or any new construction.



Source: City of Oakland, 2009; US Army Corps of Engineers, 2006

**Federally-owned Oakland Inner Harbor Tidal Canal (as of January 1, 2006)**

July 24, 2009

-  Plan Area Boundary
-  Federally-owned Oakland Inner Harbor Tidal Canal (potentially to be transferred to Oakland and Alameda jurisdictions)

*Note: The shape shown above is imprecise and does not represent exact ownership boundaries. The shape is based on low resolution maps and first-hand accounts provided by representatives of the USACE. This map should not be used for planning purposes.*



In August of 2007, the USACE notified the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (described below) of its intention to divest of its ownership and authority over the OIHTC. The initial intention was that the federally owned waters would be divided into two parcels at the center of the canal and distributed to the adjacent cities of Oakland and Alameda. As of July 2009, negotiations were still underway and final resolution of this process was as yet undetermined.

**The Public Trust Doctrine/Tidelands Trust**

The Public Trust Doctrine protects publicly-owned property rights in the tidal and submerged lands and navigable waters of the State on behalf of the people of California. The Doctrine, also referred to as the Tidelands Trust, is built on legal principles dating back millennia and established in the United States in the American Revolution, when states were designated the trustees of the navigable waterways within their boundaries for the common use of the people. These uses historically included water-related commerce and supporting facilities, navigation, and fishing, but have been extended to include open space, ecological preservation, scientific study, water-dependent or water-oriented recreation and facilities to serve waterfront visitors such as hotels, restaurants and parking lots. Uses that do not comply include residential, general commercial, retail that is not visitor serving, public schools or hospitals. Guidelines for compliance with the public trust include:

- The primary use must be water-dependant or water-related.
- The use must directly promote or support uses authorized by the Public Trust Doctrine and if the trust is managed by a local or regional governmental entity, be authorized by the statutory trust grant.
- The use must accommodate or enhance the statewide public’s enjoyment or benefit from the trust lands, not merely provide a local or municipal public benefit.

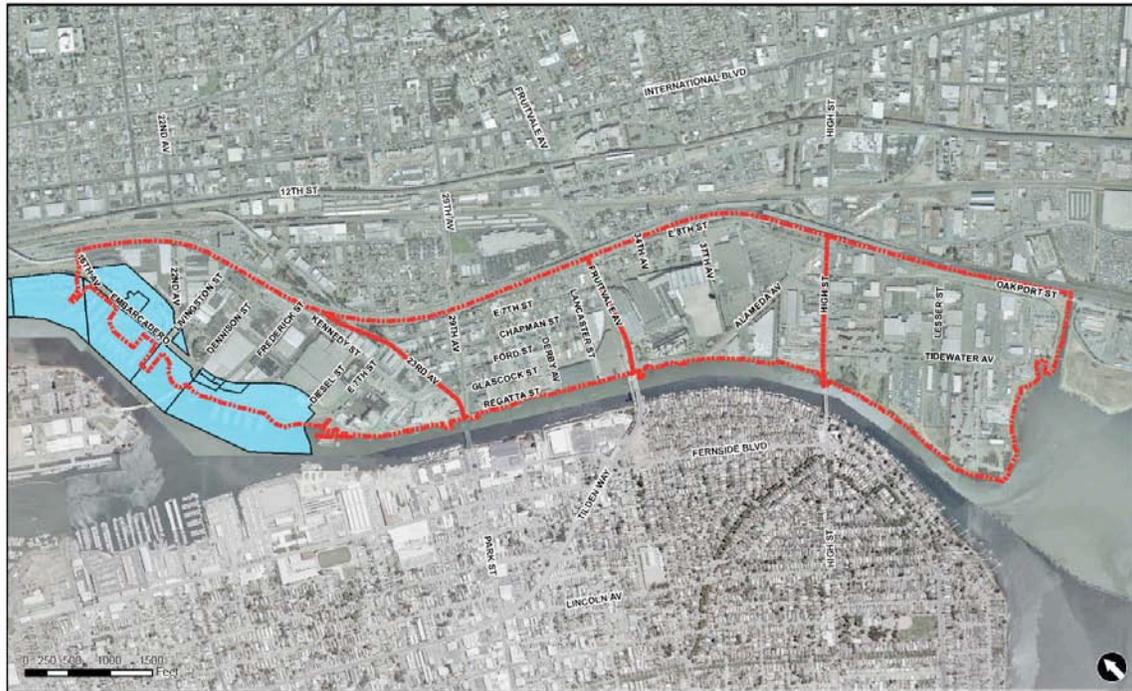
Since 1938, the State Lands Commission, which consists of the Lieutenant Governor, State Controller and Director of Finance, has been the primary administrator of the Tidelands Trust. Agencies within the state that have jurisdiction over development or other activities that can impact public trust lands and resources are responsible for compliance. In the Bay Area, the Bay Conservation and Development Commission is the primary agency responsible for compliance, but all agencies with jurisdiction over waterfront lands, including the Port and the City of Oakland, are responsible for ensuring compliance.

### **Bay Conservation and Development Commission**

Waterfront development in the Plan Area, as throughout the Bay Area, is regulated by the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC). BCDC is dedicated to the protection and enhancement of San Francisco Bay and to the encouragement of the Bay's responsible use, through governance of the Bay and its adjacent areas to ensure compliance with federal, State, and regional laws and policies governing the Bay. BCDC has review and permit authority over all land areas in the entire San Francisco Bay that lie within a 100-foot ‘Shoreline Band.’ Within the Shoreline Band, BCDC ensures that development is consistent with the *San Francisco Bay Plan* and *San Francisco Bay Area Seaport Plan* as well as the Public Trust Doctrine. BCDC also works to improve public access to the waterfront and along the water's edge as waterfront projects are developed.

### **Port of Oakland**

The Port of Oakland is a major landowner in the Plan Area. The Oakland City Charter gives the Port the responsibility to own, develop and manage lands along the Estuary on behalf of the California State Lands Commission under the Tidelands Trust. Through this role, the Port has the ability to plan for, permit and manage development in parts of the Plan Area governed by the Tidelands Trust. Specifically, the Port acts as the owner of Embarcadero Cove and areas on either side of Embarcadero to the west of Dennison Street. Also, the Port owns Union Point Park and the proposed Cryer Site Waterfront Park expansion (see discussion in Section III under Planned Improvements in the Subarea for the West Subarea), which are leased to the City of Oakland to provide these parks.



Source: Estuary Policy Plan, 1999

**Port of Oakland Ownership**

July 28, 2009

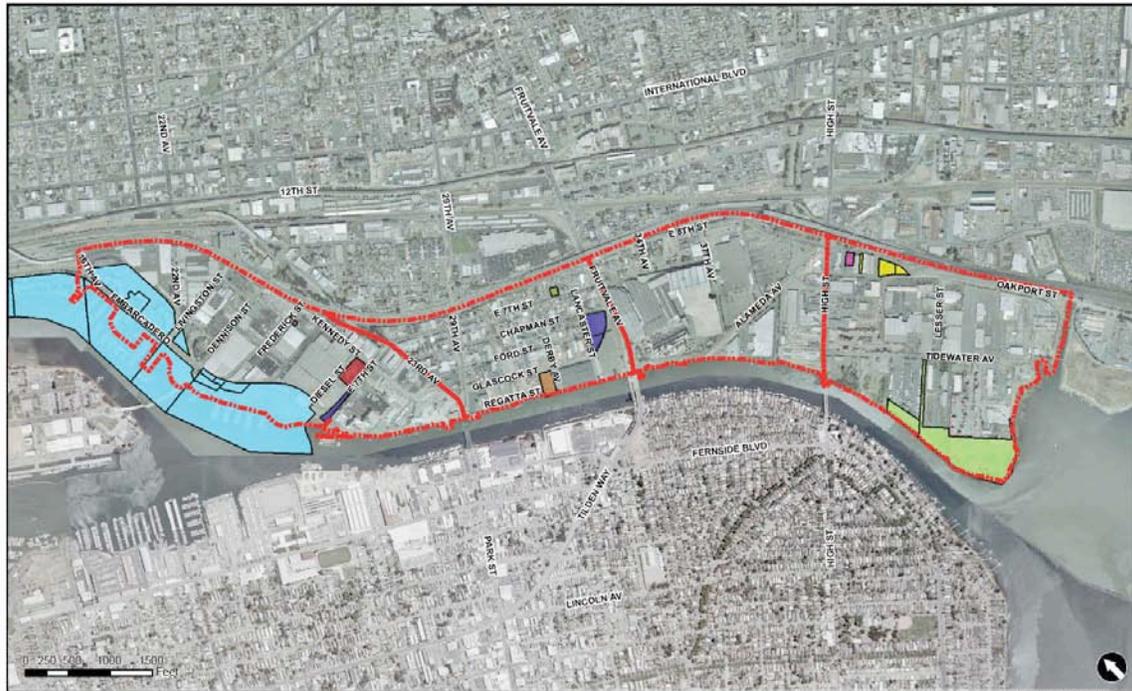
-  Subarea Boundaries
- Agency of Ownership**
-  Port of Oakland



Previous to the year 2000, the Port also had jurisdiction over much of the Plan area, including areas on the water-side of The Embarcadero and Glascock Street in the West and Central West Subareas respectively, the Alameda in the Central East Subarea, and nearly all of the East Subarea. However, following the adoption of the Estuary Policy Plan, the Port transferred jurisdiction and land use authority over these areas to the City of Oakland.

**Other Public Land Owners**

In addition to the Port, a number of City, Regional, and State agencies own properties in the Plan Area. These parcels are highlighted in the map below.



Source: City of Oakland, WinZdata 2009

**Publicly Owned Parcels**

July 28, 2009

- |   |   |
|---|---|
|  Subarea Boundaries                  |  EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT         |
| <b>Agency of Ownership</b>  |  ALAMEDA COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT   |
|  CITY OF OAKLAND                     |  COUNTY OF ALAMEDA                       |
|  PORT OF OAKLAND                     |  REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA |
|  EAST BAY MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT |  STATE OF CALIFORNIA                     |



## II. Historical Context

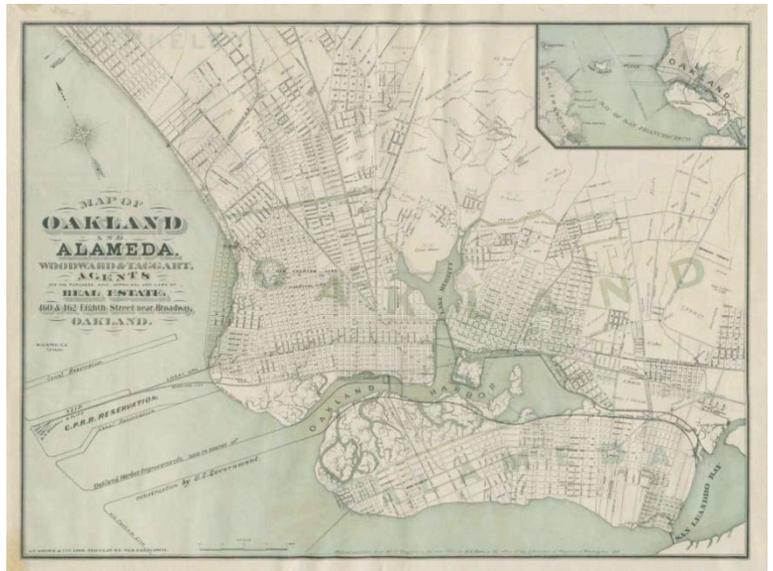
### Early History

European explorers first encountered the San Francisco Bay in 1769, when a Spanish party led by Gaspar de Portola happened upon it while trying to reach the Monterey Bay. Subsequent Spanish expeditions over the next several years scouted what is now the Oakland Estuary waterfront, noting oak and redwood groves, small streams, and mud flats. Accounts of these 1776 and 1795 expeditions cite little evidence of human occupation, though Ohlone Indians were encountered in many other parts of the East Bay.

Contrary to these observations, large shellmounds containing evidence of food collection and materials processing (the namesake of Emeryville’s Shellmound Street) suggest a native presence in the Central Estuary vicinity if not in the Plan Area itself.

In general, the Ohlone lived in small, approximately 250-person, groups scattered throughout central California. No evidence of agricultural activity exists; instead, they gathered acorns and used stone tools, first spears and later bows and arrows, to capture a wide variety of game. Fish and shellfish from the local bays and ocean were also major food sources. One of the Ohlone’s most remembered practices is the use of the sweathouse, where men spent time daily in order to stay impeccably clean. The Spanish called the Ohlone sweathouse a *temescal* after the Aztec word for a similar institution in indigenous Mexico. Today, Oakland’s Temescal neighborhood and Temescal Creek pay homage to the region’s former inhabitants.

The Central Estuary today looks very different from its form 200 years ago, not simply because of the different peoples, industries and activities that now exist there, but because the shoreline as we now know it was quite different. The ecology and geography of pre-modern history might not even be recognizable to the modern area resident or worker, as the Estuary was at most a few feet deep and was lined with extensive tidal salt marshes; in some places, it was even above sea level. These marshes formed a continuous link between the Bay and Lake Merritt. Since the 1860s, dredging has gradually altered the area’s waterways, creating Coast Guard Island (formerly Governor’s Island) and the area currently occupied by the Embarcadero and Union Point Park, as well as filling in the stretch of wetland between the Bay and the Lake Merritt while opening a continuous channel



Historic Map of Oakland Estuary in 1887 (Courtesy, Oakland Public Library)

between these western wetlands and San Leandro Bay to the east. The dredging also deepened parts of the waterfront, facilitating the entry of ships that would previously have run aground during low tide. In 1820, Spanish Governor Pablo Vicente de Solá gave an expansive land grant that included what is today Oakland to the Peralta family, the East Bay’s well-known historic landowners. To help oversee their extensive property holdings, the Peralta family hired Horace Carpentier as their attorney. In 1852, two

years after California gained independence from Spain, Carpentier persuaded the new state legislature to incorporate Oakland as a town. Within weeks of the town's incorporation, Carpentier wrested control of the Oakland waterfront from the Peraltas by persuading the town's trustees to pass an ordinance giving exclusive control of the waterfront to Carpentier himself in exchange for five dollars, a school, and three wharves. Within two years, Carpentier was elected mayor. However, it was only a matter of years until Carpentier was ousted from the Mayor's office by an unhappy public, though he continued to own and oversee the Estuary waterfront until 1868.

## Industrial Development

Since its first development, the Oakland waterfront has been an important regional industrial and transportation hub. The history of the Brooklyn Basin, the estuary's relatively deep inner harbor area, underscores the waterfront's role in the Bay Area's early population growth. The harbor was named for the ship that delivered 238 Mormons to the Bay Area in 1846. When the pilgrims, led by Sam Brannan, decided to settle across the Bay in San Francisco, that city doubled in population. Many would-be gold miners likely first set foot in California along the same stretch of coastline when the Gold Rush began several years later.

Much of the present-day landform was defined in the years of Carpentier's ownership and early industrial times, as early users of the Estuary quickly went to work dredging a usable channel, filling the salt marshes that previously defined the coastline, and reshaping the shoreline to improve industrial access and convenience. Carpentier sold his waterfront holdings to the Central Pacific Railroad in 1868, and from then on the industrial role of the Estuary waterfront in the region was solidified. The Central Pacific Railroad continued to steer the course of the development of the area in the ensuing 40 years, until the area again became part of the City of Oakland in 1909 during an expansion in which the City grew to nearly three times its previous area. By that point, infrastructure and industry had been firmly established.

As the Estuary developed into an early port, its critical amenity was the easy linkage between water- and land-based transportation networks. As a result, the Central Estuary area became the location of many critical supporting industries and infrastructure for the port and for the region at large. Marine-related industry and manufacturing on the Estuary waterfront have always been an integral part of the region's economy. In the Central Estuary in particular, agricultural processing has been a component of the area's industrial make-up since it was first developed. For over a century it has linked the inland growing and harvesting economy to broader distribution networks, providing processing facilities at the junction of land-side railroad networks and industrial piers.



*Early industry in the Oakland Estuary - 1918 (Courtesy, Oakland Public Library)*

To support these industries, working class neighborhoods grew around the waterfront as places where workers could live and easily get to work. The 1850's were a decade of significant growth in all regards for California, and not least in population growth. Many thousands of people originally moved to California seeking gold in the Sierras, but most found only disappointment in the mines and began seeking stable work in growing urban industries. At the time, the lumber industry on Oakland's waterfront and the need to transfer produce from rivers to the Bay employed many people in the mills and wharves. A small village of laborers developed around the working waterfront.

Many of these workers were of Portuguese descent and lived in the neighborhood that is now the Kennedy Tract and Jingtletown. These immigrants hailed largely from the Azorean islands, an origin shared by a number of Alameda, Contra Costa, and San Mateo County residents beginning in the latter part of the nineteenth century. By the 1910's, the Oakland Portuguese had established a strong presence in Fruitvale, the neighborhood that encompasses Jingtletown, with many community members working in the local mills and other factories. The name Jingtletown is derived from these workers, who would walk the streets jingling the coins in their pockets to show off their newfound prosperity.



*Working class neighborhood near the wharves in Oakland – 1885  
(Courtesy, Oakland Public Library)*

This industrial tradition is still reflected in the composition of the Central Estuary waterfront today, though change has steadily grown apparent in recent decades.

## Recent Investment and Change

In 1993, The League of Women Voters published a study called “The Waterfront. It Touches the World; How Does it Touch Oakland?” that drew renewed interest in the Oakland waterfront, reminding citizens that Oakland is a waterfront city. This attention coincided with renewed growth and development interest in the City of Oakland and particularly on the waterfront and the on-going transformation of a number of the industrial areas of the City. Seizing on the coincidence of these factors, in 1995 the City of Oakland and Port of Oakland sponsored a visioning charrette for the waterfront. This effort led to the development of the Estuary Policy Plan, beginning in 1996, which was the first planning effort to study the past, present, and future of the Oakland Estuary Waterfront.

The development of Jack London Square and the planned development of the Oak to Ninth sections of the waterfront to the west of the Central Estuary Area reflect the exciting present and future of the Oakland waterfront. The long industrial history of the Central Estuary waterfront and established uses there, as well as the need to maintain high quality jobs and industry in Oakland, suggest a potentially different, though equally exciting, vision for the future of this section of the waterfront.

### III. Land Use and Urban Form

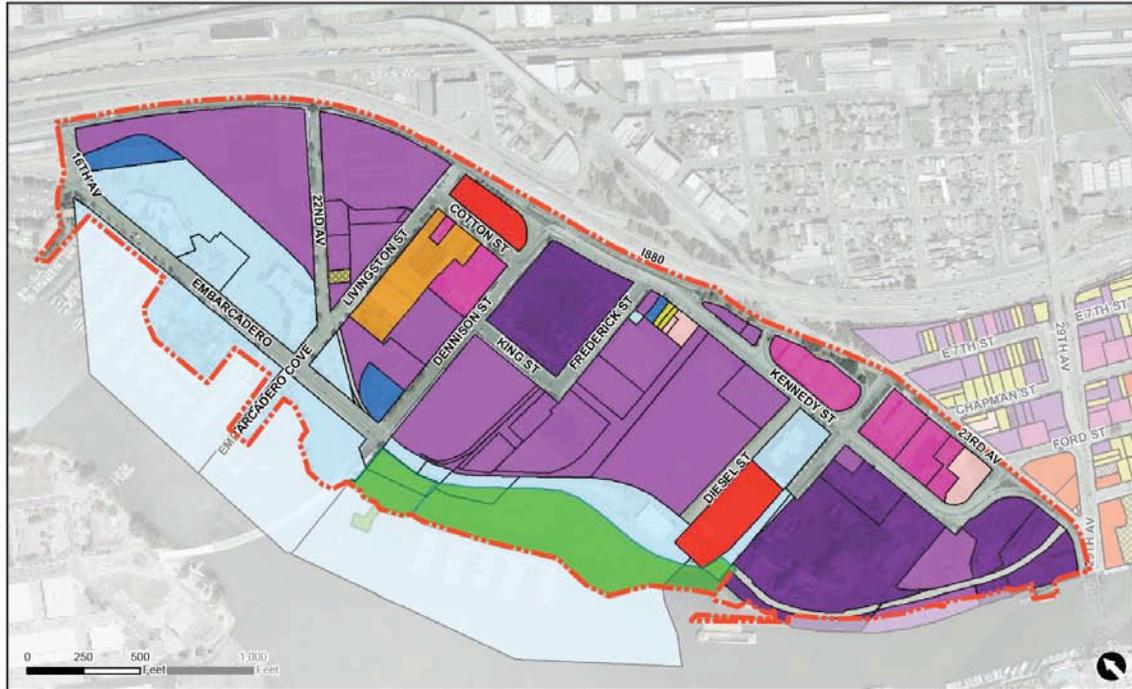
Once a predominantly industrial waterfront, the Central Estuary area today has evolved into a more mixed-use group of unique districts. Although commercial and industrial uses comprise a significant amount of acreage in the Central Estuary area, residential neighborhoods continue to expand. Over the years, the development of work/live housing and artist studio space has been introduced into traditional commercial manufacturing and industrial areas, resulting in increasing diversity of uses, form, and character throughout the Plan Area.

Detail on existing conditions in specific Subareas is provided in the following sections.



## West Subarea

### Existing Land Uses



Source: Alameda County Assessor's Office w/2data 2009

#### Existing Land Uses - West Planning Area

June 10, 2009

Subarea Boundaries	Utilities	Retail/Commercial	Commercial Lot
<b>Existing Land Use</b>	Automotive	Office	Vacant Lot
Industrial (Heavy)	Residential	Institutional	Parking Lot
Industrial (Light)	Condominium	Publicly Owned	Parks - Existing/Under Construction
Industrial (Warehouse)	Mixed Use	Industrial Lot	



Existing land uses in the portion of the Central Estuary Specific Plan area west of 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue include a mix of well-established heavy industrial uses and warehouses, more recent commercial activities and a sizeable waterfront park.

Embarcadero Cove, at the western end of the Plan Area, currently includes a number of commercial and recreational uses, predominantly oriented to the waterfront. Commercial office space, including offices of the Port of Oakland, and associated parking are the dominant use in this area. Commercial retail and services include LJ Quinn's Lighthouse, a historic lighthouse converted to a



Marine related retail in Embarcadero Cove

restaurant and bar that is a significant destination within the area, and a number of marine activity-related facilities.

Several larger industrial activities occur in the area, including the 11-acre Con-Agra industrial flour milling facility and a number of other food- and beverage-related producers and distributors. These industrial facilities comprise the dominant use by land area within the West Subarea.

A substantial new waterfront park, Union Point Park, is one of the main amenities of the entire Specific Plan area. Union Point Park is a 9-acre waterfront park that was completed in late 2005. It offers spectacular views of the marina and Estuary, waterfront access, park activities and open space. The park provides a major amenity to an area of the city with little access to park and open space.



*Young people playing soccer at the new Union Point Park, with the Con-Agra industrial facility in the background.*

The Dennison Street Bridge connects the Plan area to Coast Guard Island in the City of Alameda. This 67-acre island is owned by the U.S. Coast Guard and supports a number of Coast Guard facilities managed by Integrated Support Command Alameda, a large command base. Facilities on the island include a training center for reserve and enlisted Coast Guard personnel, living quarters, four 378-foot high endurance cutters, a medical and dental clinic, and public works facilities to service the island. Two large waterfront parcels on either side of Denison Street at the foot of the Dennison Street Bridge are currently vacant, but planning and design are underway for the parcel on the east side of the bridge, and a skateboard park is proposed for the west side of the bridge, as described under *Planned Improvements in the Plan Area*, below.

## Existing Building Form

The majority of buildings in the West Subarea are industrial warehouses and manufacturing facilities. The buildings are typically one to two stories of concrete block or metal siding with little to no articulation or pedestrian orientation. A few select facilities, such as Numi Teas, have a more inviting entry or other publicly oriented element, but street-facing facades are predominantly solid and spartan, reflective of their industrial use.

The Embarcadero Cove commercial center includes a core of relocated Victorian houses converted to offices, surrounded by two- to four-story office buildings that reflect a simple Modernist style typical of mid- to late-20<sup>th</sup> Century office construction, with façades of concrete and glass with little articulation. These buildings generally front onto the street and sidewalk but are surrounded by expansive parking. Between the Embarcadero and the waterfront, the one- to two-story marine industrial and service commercial buildings reflect an earlier 20<sup>th</sup> Century style, with smaller footprints, little provision for

parking, and a more informal organization. Fences and other barriers project an uninviting façade onto the Embarcadero street frontage.

The 11-acre ConAgra facility is composed of large concrete industrial structures, including low-slung warehouse and distribution facilities and some processing structures that are five or more stories tall. The majority of the entities in this area are relatively land-intensive, though some include substantial amounts of paved or un-landscaped open space and smaller storage or other support buildings.

## **Estuary Policy Plan Guidance**

The Estuary Policy Plan envisions a higher intensity area within the West Subarea, with improved access and business orientation to the waterfront and continued and expanded industry where existing industrial uses are successful. The Plan encourages the development of water-oriented commercial uses within Embarcadero Cove, and the maintenance of light industry, especially food related industry, in the Brooklyn Basin, with the development of compatible office, support commercial, and institutional uses in the area. With regard to the Con-Agra plant and surrounding heavy industry, the Plan encourages existing industry to continue while it is still viable but, recognizing that market forces may make these sites functionally obsolete, it recommends that in the long term they should be transitioned to a new mix of waterfront-oriented uses. Additionally, it recommends that the mix of waterfront residential and commercial uses should be compatible with the existing surrounding areas both in terms of scale and character and in terms of connectivity to surrounding areas and orientation to the waterfront.

## **General Plan and Zoning**

The waterfront areas of the West Subarea are designated by the Estuary Policy Plan as Waterfront Commercial Recreation 2 and Parks. Areas between the waterfront and the freeway, with the exception of the triangular Con-Agra site, are designated as Light Industry 2. The intent of the Light Industry 2 designation is to maintain light industrial, food processing and manufacturing uses, allow a limited amount of office, residential institutional or commercial uses with an FAR up to 2.0 per parcel or a density of up to 30 units per gross acre. The triangular ConAgra site is designated in the Estuary Policy Plan as Planned Waterfront Development 2. The intent of this designation is to provide for the continuation of existing industrial uses, allowing for their future transition to a higher density mix of urban uses if the existing uses prove to be no longer viable in this area. This designation allows for a FAR of up to 2.0 per parcel and up to 40 dwelling units per gross acre.

This area is predominantly zoned M-40 Heavy Industrial with a small area of M-30 General Industrial.

## **Public Space**

### **Bay Trail**

The Bay Trail through this area is partially complete. The waterside trail through Embarcadero Cove is interrupted at the Harbormaster’s Office, British Marine, and Livingston Pier. The Cryer Site improvements discussed under Proposed Improvements (below) will complete the connection of the Bay Trail between Embarcadero Cove and Union Point Park. The Park Street Triangle improvements will complete a near-term inland connection for the Trail; however, implementing the longer-term alignment along the Estuary will require redevelopment or reconfiguration of the ConAgra, Seapower Marine, and Cemex sites to create a waterfront right-of-way for the trail.



*Bay Trail through West Subarea*

### **Union Point Park**

Union Point Park is a 9-acre waterfront park that was completed in late 2005. The park includes restroom facilities, parking, and other amenities for Bay Trail users, as well as extensive formal and informal play and picnic areas. The park is the most substantial new park in Oakland in many years and an exciting destination within the Plan Area.



*Union Point Park*

## Planned Improvements in the Subarea

### ***Cryer Site Waterfront Park***

The former Cryer Boatworks site on the Estuary waterfront is located immediately to the south of the landing of the Dennison Street Bridge. The 2-acre park will be adjacent to and extend the existing Union Point Park. The planned improvements include a 450-foot segment of the Bay Trail, a park area, interpretive signage, and parking. Future improvements, subject to funding availability, may include beach restoration, pier replacement, and upgrading and converting the barn-like boatworks building for community use and trail and water-related services. Phase I design work was completed in August 2008, construction is scheduled to begin summer 2009.



*Designs for Cryer Site Waterfront Park*

### ***Waterfront Skateboard Park***

The vacant site between the Livingston Street Pier and Dennison Street Bridge is an EPA Superfund site that has been capped with a concrete pad. A skateboard park has been proposed for the site, and the Tony Hawk Foundation has applied for grant funding to help with design of the park. The site would be sculpted with skateboard ramps, which will allow it to remain capped, eliminating the need for environmental remediation. The Bay Trail already runs along the water and will be separated from the skateboard park by a landscaped slope. Other uses for the site, which is owned by the Port of Oakland, are also being considered. The anticipated schedule for these improvements is unknown.

### ***Livingston Street Pier and Embarcadero Cove***

The Livingston Street Pier is a property of the Port of Oakland that is leased through 2011 to Vortex Marine Construction, a full service marine contractor specializing in marine and heavy civil construction that owns and operates one of the largest fleets of floating construction equipment in the Western United States. As a long-term option, pending the relocation of Vortex Marine Construction or expiration of its lease, the pier could be opened for public use and the existing building could potentially be used for recreational/retail uses that relate to the proposed skateboard park on the adjacent site. In the meantime, a short section of trail is being designed to run across the sidewalk area to connect the existing trail on either side.

The Embarcadero Cove development includes sections of the waterside Bay Trail, but they are disjointed and hard to follow. With the cooperation of the Port and its tenants, the City proposes to use Measure DD funds to upgrade and connect the trail, especially at interrupted segments at the Harbormaster's Office and the British Marine parcel.

## Key Opportunities and Constraints

The high visibility of the West Subarea and the Estuary waterfront from Interstate 880 (I-880) at this point gives it the potential to attract visitors for waterfront-related and commercial activities. The predominance of food- and beverage-related industry also creates opportunities for gastro-tourism, which has the potential to benefit the area by drawing in visitors to support these local industries. However, the nature of the work of many of these industries is not necessarily amenable to hosting visitors. In fact, many users, such as industrial bakeries, have early morning shift hours, truck circulation needs and other external impacts that might discourage the presence of pedestrians and visitors in the area. Balancing these factors will be a high priority in the West Subarea.

The Embarcadero is an important truck route for many area businesses, but also provides a significant opportunity to improve visibility and aesthetics in the area. Some sections of the Embarcadero have already been improved in recent years, but in other areas, particularly through Embarcadero Cove, where many visitors will first enter the Plan Area, there is an opportunity to widen sidewalks, improve frontages, add landscaping, and create a more attractive gateway to the area. It will be critical that any such improvements balance the needs of trucks and preserve their ability to use this roadway to access industry in the area.

With the continued development of the Bay Trail and waterfront parks throughout this area, it will become an even more valuable resource and attractive destination for Oakland residents and regional visitors. This draw could be capitalized on to support retail and service businesses or other commercial endeavors in this area.

Unusual rights-of-way throughout the West Subarea create an occasionally confusing and often pedestrian-unfriendly circulation network. A remainder rail right-of-way slices through the northern corner of the site, a number of streets do not connect through, and the quality of the pedestrian environment on streets other than Embarcadero is low. Improving circulation within this area will be a high priority.

## Central-West Subarea

### Existing Land Uses



Source: Alameda County Assessor's Office win2data 2009

#### Existing Land Uses - Central West Planning Area

June 10, 2009

Subarea Boundaries	Utilities	Retail/Commercial	Commercial Lot
Industrial (Heavy)	Automotive	Office	Vacant Lot
Industrial (Light)	Residential	Institutional	Parking Lot
Industrial (Warehouse)	Condominium	Publicly Owned	Parks - Existing/Under Construction
	Mixed Use	Industrial Lot	



The Central-West Subarea, between 23<sup>rd</sup> and Fruitvale Avenues, is unique within the Plan Area, as it includes a substantial amount of residential mixed in with lower-intensity industrial use. The area is home to an increasingly vibrant residential and artist population and is the site of significant new residential development and community reinvestment. The existing land use composition is dominated by work/live spaces, single-family bungalows and houses and recently developed apartments and condominiums. The area is also the home of the Voila Juice factory outlet and café and Tiki Tom's



*A typical Central-West Subarea industrial warehouse converted to live/work space.*

restaurant/bar/catering. The existing industrial spaces are typically large warehouses, many of which are used by artists and include residential components.

The waterfront itself is an evolving model of the kind of access and open space that is envisioned for the whole Estuary waterfront, with a well-developed and attractively landscaped stretch of the Bay Trail, and two small “pocket” parks which are under construction.

Other notable uses in the area include the Institute of Mosaic Art, an artists’ and educational facility that also serves as a community center for a portion of the residential population; the Oakland Museum Women’s Board White Elephant Sale Warehouse, site of an annual fundraising rummage sale; and the University of California at Berkeley’s T. Gary Rogers Rowing Center, which opened in 2004 and preserved and incorporated a portion of its predecessor, the historic Ky Ebright Boathouse.



*New residential development and associated streetscape improvements.*



*The Institute of Mosaic Art*

## Existing Building Form

Existing buildings in this area are relatively low-intensity and space-intensive. With the exception of recent residential developments, which range from 3 to 5 stories, there is little over two stories in the area, and many one-story residences and tall single-story warehouse facilities.

There is no consistent style, size, or form within the area, and the eclectic mix of uses, styles, and level of upkeep is reflected on a property-by-property level across the majority of the Subarea. This eclectic mix adds significant charm to the neighborhood, creating a character that is unique not just within the Plan Area, but within the region as a whole. The artistic nature of many of the area’s residents is expressed through creatively decorated facades ranging from brightly painted colors to unusual landscaping, and

from large-scale sculptural metalwork to finely detailed mosaic art. Coupled with low traffic volume, the result is a stimulating visual experience that contributes to a pleasant walking environment.

The new higher-density residential properties along the waterfront and parts of Glascock Street reflect loft and condo styles of the last two decades, and are generally attractive, well articulated, and well maintained, with attractive and formally landscaped street frontages. The more formal and modern style of this new construction is a notable departure from the existing character of the neighborhood.

## **General Plan and Zoning**

The Estuary Plan designates the entire Central West Subarea as Residential Mixed Use. The Residential Mixed Use district is intended to enhance and strengthen the viability and attractiveness of the Kennedy Tract as a mixed-use residential neighborhood of low to medium-density housing within a fine-grained fabric of commercial and light-industrial uses, and it allows for an FAR up to 1.0 and residential densities up to 40 units per acre.

The Central-West Subarea is zoned Housing and Business Mix 3 (HBX-3). There are a total of three HBX zones whose intent is to allow for mixed use districts that recognize both residential and business activities. The HBX-3 zone is intended to provide development standards for areas that have a mix of industrial, heavy commercial and higher density residential development.

## **Estuary Policy Plan Guidance**

The Estuary Policy Plan recommends that the affordable residential neighborhood in the Kennedy tract be preserved and expanded. For the area at large, the Plan recommends that future development provide for a mixture of compatible uses with emphasis on a variety of affordable housing types, while maintaining the area's character of small buildings.

## **Public Space**

### **Bay Trail**

With the exception of the Schilling property (Tiki Tom’s restaurant), the segment of the Bay Trail from 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Derby Avenue is complete and runs through a broad and attractive waterfront landscaped open space that was developed as part of recent residential development there. The trail segment from Derby to Lancaster is under construction. As discussed under Planned Improvements, the boardwalk piers that will provide connection under the bridges are currently in the design and entitlements stages. Additionally, the new parking to be provided as part of the redesign of the Park Street Triangle will provide a new access point for people driving to the Bay Trail to begin a walk or cycling trip from this point.



*New residential development and Bay Trail along the waterfront.*

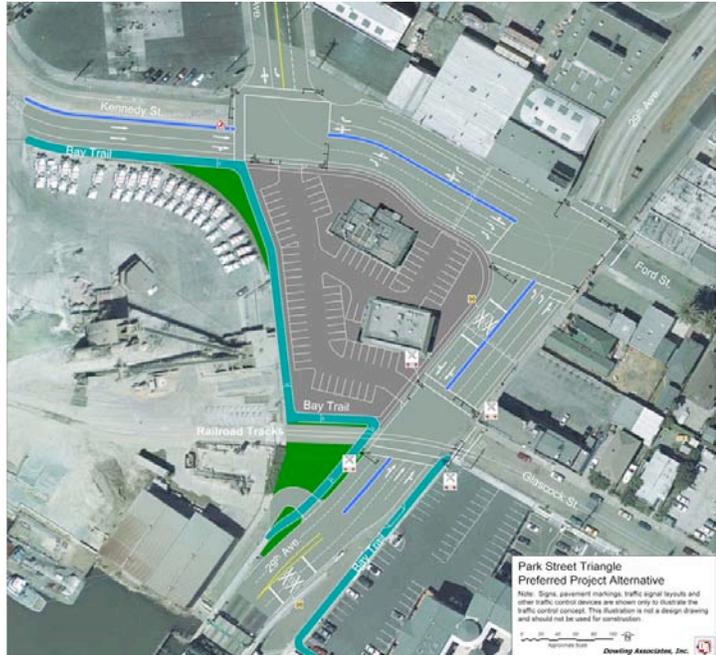
### **Derby Avenue and Lancaster Street Pocket Parks**

These two parks are currently under construction, as detailed under Planned Improvements.

## Planned Improvements in the Subarea

### **Park Street Triangle**

The Park Street Triangle is a triangular block between 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Kennedy Street that currently includes a 7-Eleven convenience store and Nikko's Family Restaurant. The site is a gateway to the waterfront for travelers along 23rd Avenue and the Park Street Bridge and a terminus for bicyclists along the Embarcadero. The site is located approximately midway between Jack London Square and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Regional Shoreline and is considered a potential starting point for a journey along the waterfront. To this end, a conceptual study of the area was developed using Measure DD funds to improve circulation and provide parking for and access to the waterfront. More detailed traffic studies for the Triangle are being undertaken by Alameda County in concert with the redesign of the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue overpasses on I-880, which will alter traffic patterns and volumes in the vicinity.



*A conceptual redesign for the Park Street Triangle includes a Bay Trail connection and user parking. (Source: Park Street Triangle Traffic Study)*

### **Glascocock Street Rail Reactivation and Related Street Improvements**

Since 1949, the Union Pacific Railroad, formerly the Southern Pacific Railroad, has operated trains along Glascocock Street through a revocable permit. In recent decades, trains have primarily accessed industrial facilities in the Plan Area from the north, via the Hanlon Lead, and run on Glascocock Street infrequently, until usage ceased around 2005. Proposed seismic retrofit improvements by Caltrans to the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue/I-880 overpass north of the Plan Area will soon render the Hanlon Lead inoperable, resulting in the need for Union Pacific to reactivate the Glascocock spur to access Estuary area industrial facilities. Trains will run through the Plan Area in the middle of the night, passing twice (arriving and departing) per night approximately three times per week. In order to reactivate the spur track, Caltrans has provided \$1.2 million in funding for street improvements and the City of Oakland will be dedicating additional funding to these improvements, which will include sidewalks, curbs and streetscaping in addition to basic roadway improvements. As of early 2009, the improvement plans are in early stages of planning and design.

### **Derby Avenue and Livingston Street “Pocket” Parks and Bay Trail Connection**

Two streets between the Park Street and Fruitvale bridges terminate at the waterfront – Derby Avenue and Lancaster Streets. These streets are ideal locations for pocket parks, providing observation areas along the waterfront. The segment of Bay Trail between them runs behind the Oakland Museum Women's Board warehouse, which required acquisition of an easement and design of a pile-supported structure. Measure DD and federal funds were secured for the Bay Trail connection project, and construction is scheduled for completion in late 2009.

### **Park Street and Fruitvale Avenue Bridge Bay Trail Connections**

Several alternatives were considered for building the Bay Trail around the bridges at Park St. and Fruitvale Ave., including a floating trail, a fixed pier design, an underpass, an overpass, and an inland street crossing. The fixed pier running under the bridge was selected as the preferred solution because it allows Bay Trail users to stay on the waterfront and avoid auto conflicts, and it also has acceptable construction and maintenance costs. In the case of the Park Street Bridge, simply widening the existing maintenance catwalk is proposed, in order to avoid conflicts with the shipping channel. Measure DD funds have been designated for construction and preliminary designs were completed; however, entitlement issues have held up construction. Because this section of the Estuary is part of the OIHTC, a federal waterway, the City is currently negotiating with the Army Corps of Engineers to be granted the easement to construct the improvements.



*Photo of Bay Trail currently under construction.*

## **Key Opportunities and Constraints**

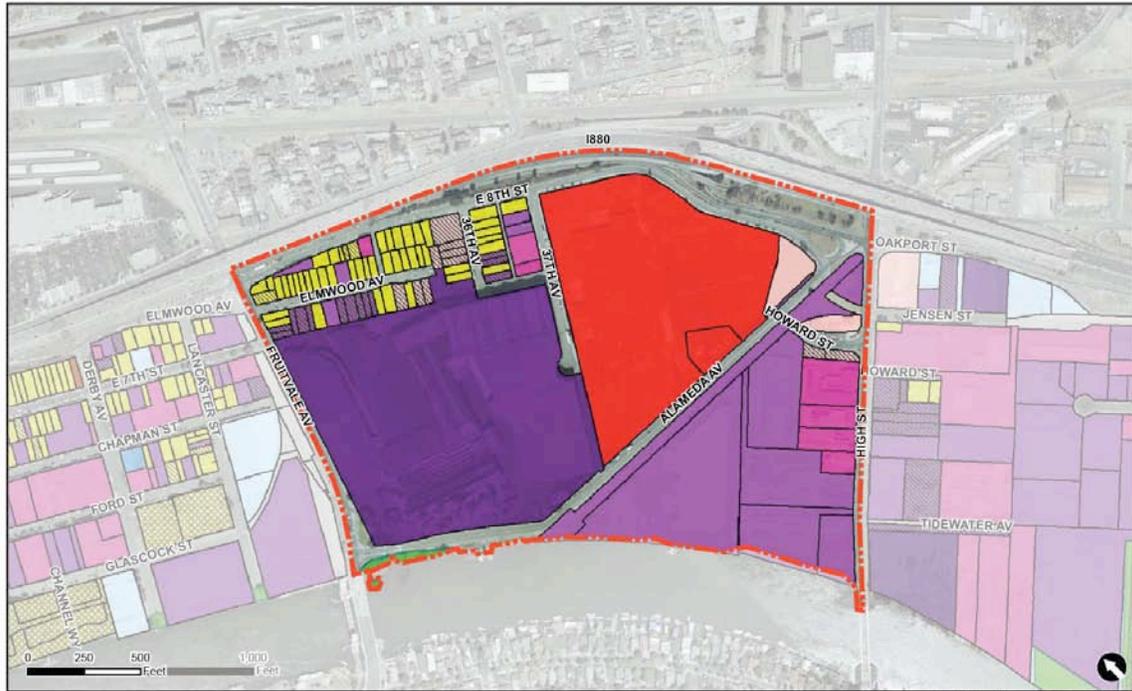
The residential presence in this Subarea provides a distinctly different set of opportunities and constraints related to improving the livability of the area. In particular, the public realm provided by the streets offers the most potential for improving the neighborhood character. Not only can streets improve conditions for walking, but they can also provide more orderly on-street parking to address issues raised by area residents related to parking. In particular, lack of curbs on some streets results in haphazard parking in front of some businesses and residences and in the pedestrian path of travel where a sidewalk would be. Additionally, the annual White Elephant sale at the Oakland Museum Women's Board building and some large activities at the Institute of Mosaic art occasionally result in significant demand for parking, and providing appropriate parking in addition to better enforcement in this area could help alleviate these issues. Ongoing improvements to Lancaster Street and Derby Avenue and proposed streetscape improvements to Glascock Street, as well as those already completed on a section of Derby Avenue, highlight the potential to create a safer and more attractive public realm. Coupled with the unique and attractive facades of many of the buildings in the area, improved sidewalks and landscaping would result in a very pleasant and interesting walking environment.

The more significant challenge in the Central West Subarea is the need to improve connections at the edges of this area to better connect it to the rest of the Plan Area and to the City and region as a whole. At the southern border, the Bay Trail will provide improved connectivity to adjacent areas and regional

circulation once the connections at the two bridges are complete. Fruitvale Avenue to the east and 29<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenues to the west present significant barriers to connectivity in all other directions. These streets are wide, have few crossing locations, and are oriented to high-speed automobile traffic, making them unappealing to cross. As well, 29<sup>th</sup> and Fruitvale Avenues provide connection to the north across I-880, connecting the neighborhood to other adjacent residential areas, commercial corridors, and the Fruitvale BART station, yet these streets and the crossings they provide are unattractive, uncomfortable, and in some cases unsafe. Improving all of these connections should be an important focus of improvements to this Subarea.

## Central-East Subarea

### Existing Land Uses



Source: Alameda County Assessor's Office w/2010 data 2009

June 10, 2009

#### Existing Land Uses - Central East Planning Area

Subarea Boundaries	Utilities	Retail/Commercial	Commercial Lot
Existing Land Use	Automotive	Office	Vacant Lot
Industrial (Heavy)	Residential	Institutional	Parking Lot
Industrial (Light)	Condominium	Publicly Owned	Parks - Existing/Under Construction
Industrial (Warehouse)	Mixed Use	Industrial Lot	



The Central-East Subarea, between Fruitvale Avenue and High Street, has perhaps the most diverse mix of uses, including a small extension of the Kennedy Tract residential neighborhood; heavy industry centered on the large Owens-Brockway facility; a major commercial center, and a large area of light industrial uses and warehousing.

The northern corner of the Central-East Subarea includes a few short blocks of one- and two-story single-family homes on Elmwood and 36<sup>th</sup> Avenues, as well as a number of vacant lots currently in use as informal parking lots. The largest single use in the area is the 28-acre Owens-Brockway glass recycling facility, which has seen



Owens Brockway Glass makes up a large portion of the Central East Subarea. (Source: Microsoft Virtual Earth)

decreasing productivity in the last decade and whose owners have considered selling the property.

Another large parcel in this Subarea is the commercial center that includes a Home Depot and various other commercial uses, including a gymnasium and a sports club. This is a relatively successful regional commercial destination that capitalizes on its close proximity to the I-880 and High Street, capturing traffic from both the Estuary area and Alameda island. A commercial pad site adjacent to this center at the corner of Alameda Avenue and the I-880 off-ramp is currently vacant. The southern section of the Central East Subarea, south of Alameda Avenue, is made up of warehousing and light industrial uses.

### Existing Building Form

The residential properties in the northern corner of the Subarea are predominantly one- and two-story bungalows, many in need of care and maintenance and interspersed with vacant lots. The Owens-Brockway facility is a sprawling 1-2 story warehouse style construction that covers the majority of its lot. The site also includes smokestacks and other industrial structures along the Alameda Avenue frontage. The commercial center is a typical auto-oriented big box center, with a large one-story decorated shed in the center of a field of parking. The warehouses and industrial facilities at the southern corner are all typical long one-story concrete and steel warehouse buildings.



*Typical light industrial warehouses (Source: Microsoft Virtual Earth)*

### General Plan and Zoning

The Central East Subarea includes three Estuary Policy Plan land use designations: Residential Mixed Use (RMU), Heavy Industrial (HI) and General Commercial-1 (GC-1). The northern area that currently includes residential properties and parking is designated as Residential Mixed Use, and is contiguous with the RMU area in the Central West Subarea. As noted previously, the RMU designation, which is intended to enhance and strengthen the viability and attractiveness of the Kennedy Tract as a mixed-use residential neighborhood of low to medium-density housing within a fine-grained fabric of commercial and light industrial uses, allows FAR of up to 1.0 per parcel and residential densities of up to 40 units per acre. The Owens-Brockway site is designated Heavy Industrial, which is intended to retain the existing glass recycling and manufacturing functions within this area and promote an enhanced relationship with the adjoining Kennedy Tract neighborhood, Fruitvale Avenue, and the waterfront. The existing commercial center and warehousing and light industrial to the south of Alameda Avenue are designated General Commercial-1, which is intended to provide for the expansion of regional-serving retail and commercial uses that can benefit from freeway accessibility.

With the exception of the small parcels fronting onto 8th Street, which are zoned HBX-3, the remainder of the Central East Subarea is zoned M-40 Heavy Industrial.

## Estuary Policy Plan Guidance

The Estuary Policy Plan envisions this area as a local and regional-serving retail destination with the exception of the Owens-Brockway site, which it encourages to be retained and improved. The EPP recommends the reuse of existing warehouse properties south of Alameda Avenue and west of High Street for high-quality retail uses that complement adjacent commercial uses; a departure from the current warehousing and light industrial uses there. Additionally, at the time the EPP was written, the Owens-Brockway plant was a more significant employer and more stable long-term presence, so the Plan recommended improving compatibility between industrial and residential uses, and enhancing the relationship of the plant with the waterfront.

## Public Space

### Bay Trail

The section of the Bay Trail connecting Fruitvale Bridge Park to the eastern side of the central-east planning Subarea proved challenging, due to the limited easement adjacent to the Capture Technologies industrial facility at 3575 Alameda Avenue, since that building extends to the top of the Estuary bank. Design work began in late 2008 to create a partly pier-supported segment of the trail that will cross two private parcels. Once complete, the Bay Trail will be continuous across this Subarea and will connect across Fruitvale Avenue and High Street via the proposed fixed piers running under the bridges.

### Fruitvale Bridge Park

Fruitvale Bridge Park is a one-third-acre park located at the foot of the Fruitvale Avenue bridge. The park provides an outlook over the Estuary from benches on the embankment and a small fishing pier.



*Fruitvale Bridge Park*

## Planned Improvements in the Subarea

### High Street Bridge Bay Trail Connections

Several alternatives were considered for building the Bay Trail around the High Street Bridge, including a floating trail, a fixed pier design, an underpass, an overpass, and an inland street crossing. The fixed pier running under the bridge was selected as the preferred solution because it allows Bay Trail users to stay on the waterfront and avoid auto conflicts, and it also has acceptable construction and maintenance costs. At the High Street Bridge, simply widening the existing maintenance catwalk is proposed, in order to avoid conflicts with the shipping channel. Measure DD funds have been designated for construction, and preliminary designs were completed. However, entitlements issues have held up construction. Because this section of the Estuary is part of the OIHTC, a federal waterway, the City is currently negotiating with the Army Corps of Engineers to be granted the easement to construct the improvements.

## Key Opportunities and Constraints

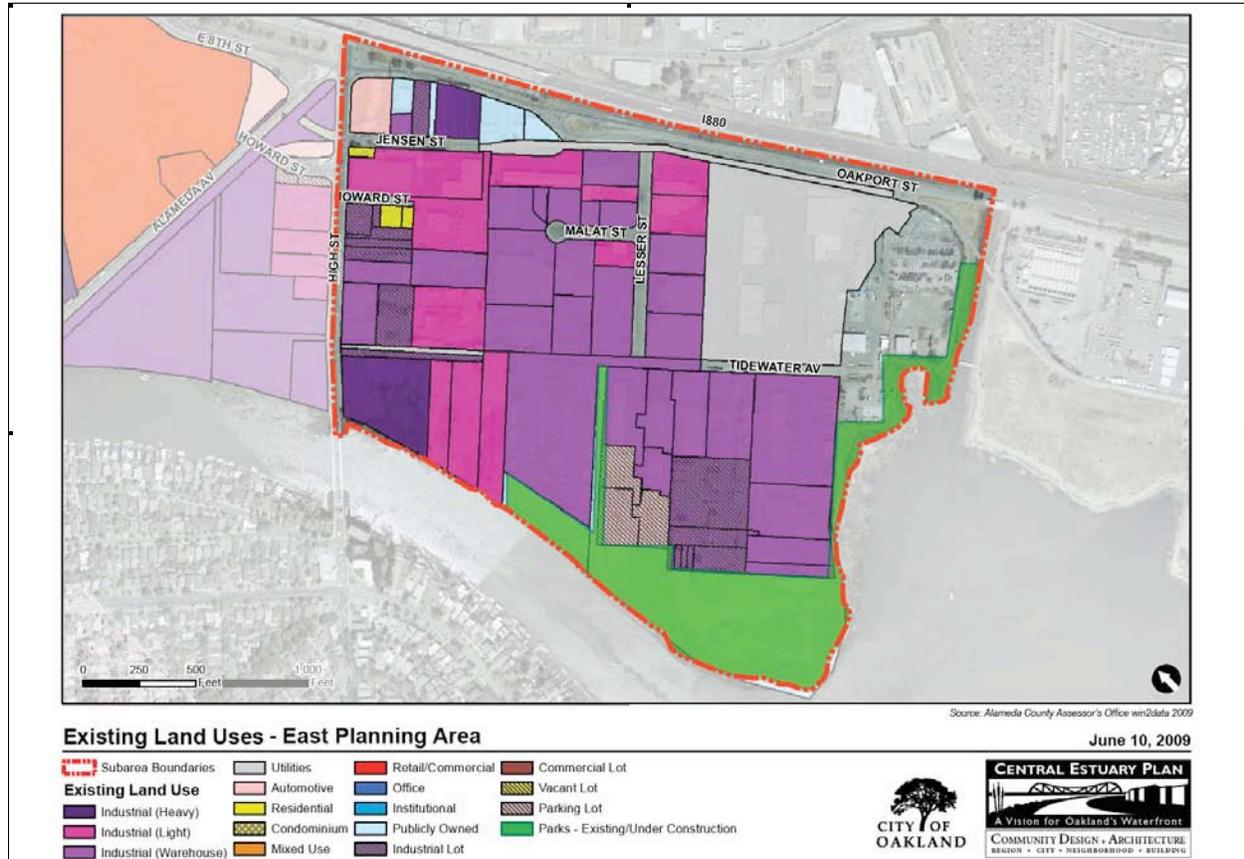
The Owens-Brockway glass processing facility offers the largest potential opportunity site in the Plan Area. While the current use should be encouraged to continue as long as it is economically viable and its owners desire to remain, the facility may become vacant in the relatively near future. If this occurs, the size and location of this parcel afford a number of opportunities for its reuse as either an improved industrial use or otherwise.

The options for the small residential extension of the Kennedy Tract along Elmwood and 36<sup>th</sup> Avenues should be considered in light of the large number of vacant properties and the proximity of this area to the freeway. Existing residential buildings limit the ability to significantly alter the composition of the area. This residential area faces significant impacts from poor air quality, a noisy environment, and other impacts associated with adjacency to the freeway and current industry and potential future industrial uses if the Owen-Brockway property remains industrial in the long-term. However, there is currently nearly as much vacant land as land occupied by homes, which may offer a tipping point opportunity for reconsidering the long-term future and character potential of this neighborhood. Expanded industrial or new commercial uses may be more appropriate uses of this area in light of the environmental quality impacts from the surrounding freeway and uses. If residential development were to be considered here, significant mitigations would be required to address these issues.

Similar to the Central West Subarea, connections at the edges of the Central East Planning Area to the adjacent Subareas, as well as across I-880, present significant barriers to walkability and livability in the area. Both High Street and Fruitvale Avenue are high-speed automotive corridors, heavily used by traffic coming and going from Alameda, that offer few crossing opportunities and little comfortable pedestrian accommodation. Further, Alameda Avenue, which crosses through the center of this Subarea, is a wide street with no signals or crossings on its entire length, which results in an inability for people to safely cross between the commercial center at the heart of this sub area and either the Bay Trail or the industrial uses across Alameda Avenue. Improving connectivity within this Subarea and to other Subareas will help decrease the notable auto-dominance of this Subarea. With more multimodal accommodations within this Subarea, more businesses and industry might be better able to accommodate both regional markets, as they do now, and the local market.

## East Subarea

### Existing Land Uses



The East Subarea consists of the portion of the Plan Area east of High Street, which contains a number of businesses in the manufacturing and construction sectors, including two sizable aggregate producers of fill materials for public roads, a hardwood lumber company, and mini-storage and trucking uses. These businesses benefit from close proximity to major transportation routes, including I-880 and the Bay for transporting raw materials by barge. The Malat/Lesser Street area has a significant supply of relatively new warehouses and some large cabinetmakers.



*Aggregate producers are a major industry in the East Subarea.*

The East Bay Regional Park District is developing a waterfront park along the waterfront from Damon Slough around the southern point. The inland portion of the land owned by the Park District is currently leased for outdoor trailer storage.

Pacific Gas & Electric owns a 13.6-acre site at the eastern edge of the Subarea which is used as a local operations center, including a vehicle yard, dispatch, and customer service facilities.

Immediately east of the Plan area boundary, across from the PG&E facility, is the East Bay Municipal Utility District's 28-acre Oakport Wet Weather Treatment Facility, which is designed to prevent raw sewage from entering San Francisco Bay during large storms.

### Existing Building Form

The light industrial and warehouse facilities in this Subarea are lower intensity than those of some of the other industrial areas within the Plan Area. Typically, building footprints fill only a portion of each parcel and the remainder is used for loading, storage and parking. Buildings are typically standard concrete and steel long rectangular warehouses, frequently with loading docks.



*Industrial warehousing is the most common built form*

### General Plan and Zoning

The Estuary Policy Plan divides the East Planning Area into Light Industry 3, Planned Waterfront Development 3, and a park at the tip of the peninsula in the area currently owned by East Bay Regional Parks District. The northern half of this Subarea, north of Tidewater Avenue, is designated Light Industry 3, which is intended to maintain light industrial, wholesale/retail, manufacturing, and public utility uses in this area while providing for enhancement of the waterfront environment. South of Tidewater, the EPP designates the area as Planned Waterfront Development 3, which is intended to provide for the continuation of existing industrial uses on properties south of Tidewater Avenue, allowing for their transition to light industrial, research and development, and office uses in a waterfront business park setting.

The East Subarea is zoned M-40, Heavy Industry.

### Estuary Policy Plan Guidance

The Estuary Policy Plan divides the area east of High Street into the areas north and south of Tidewater Avenue. For areas north of Tidewater Avenue, it recommends maintaining existing viable industrial and service-oriented uses, and encourages the intensification of underutilized and vacant properties. For areas south of Tidewater Avenue, it encourages continued industrial use, but also encourages new research and development and light industrial activities which are compatible with the adjacent EBMUD Oakport Facility and EBRPD's Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline Park. Additionally, it recommends that areas near the 66th Avenue interchange redevelop with new commercial uses that can benefit from proximity to freeway interchanges and serve both regional and local markets.

## **Public Space**

### **Bay Trail**

The majority of the trail through this Subarea, the segment within Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline Park, is complete. The connection from the regional park to High Street and other areas to the west remains under feasibility study, as the industrial parcels in this area extend all the way to the shoreline, leaving no public right-of-way across which the trail may run. The segment of trail adjacent to the Gallagher & Burk asphalt plant is proposed to be a concrete pier supported walkway. Because the Hanson Aggregate facility uses water access for delivery of materials, the trail must be designed to allow materials to be transferred from barges to the site while allowing for shoreline trail access. The trail will incorporate associated amenities such as standardized lighting and signage. Moffatt & Nichol completed conceptual design work. The property owners have declined to grant an easement and the project is currently on hold. Once completed, this would provide continuous trail segment from High Street to the Damon Slough at the southern end of the Plan Area.

### **Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline Park**

The 741-acre Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline Park begins at the eastern end of the Plan Area as it runs along the tip of the peninsula and wraps around the Damon Slough. The park continues east around the San Leandro Bay creating an extensive park that offers great conditions for walking, jogging, cycling, bird watching, picnicking, and other opportunities to take advantage of the preserved waterfront open space. This section of shoreline offers some of the last remaining preserved natural conditions of the Oakland Estuary shoreline, exemplifying the tidal marsh ecosystem that historically defined the entire Estuary and the San Leandro Bay.



*The park is currently under development and is surrounded by, and in fact partially in use for, light industrial uses and storage.*

## **Planned Improvements in the Plan Area**

### **Tidewater Aquatic Center**

As part of the on-going development of the Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline, East Bay Regional Parks District is improving the waterfront area around Tidewater Avenue and planning to build a new boathouse and supporting facilities on property currently owned by the Park District but leased for trailer storage. The Tidewater Aquatic Center will be home to the Oakland Strokes high school rowing program, which serves students from high schools throughout the region, and offer programs in competitive rowing, sea kayaking and canoeing, classes in boating and water safety, and boat rentals. The Center will also host outreach programs for local youth.

As of spring 2009, early phases of the project are complete, including a continuous segment of Bay Trail through the area with some landscaping and furnishings as well as an access road and staging area with

restrooms and picnic amenities. The next phase of the project will be to construct the Tidewater Aquatic Center building and dock.

This amenity will bring a significant amount of new activity to this area of the Estuary. The facility is a partnership between the East Bay Regional Parks District and Oakland Strokes. Fundraising, design, and lease agreements are complete, and as of winter 2009 construction is anticipated to begin in the near future.

### **Key Opportunities and Constraints**

The extensive shoreline and low land use intensity of the existing uses provide opportunities for significant change in this area. Many of the existing uses are economically viable and may continue to prosper in coming years. These businesses benefit from easy access to I-880 and may have room to continue to grow on their current properties. Currently, some of the properties in the area, especially the PG&E property at the east end of the Subarea, are significantly contaminated and will require substantial remediation before they may be improved.

The areas south of Tidewater Avenue include some vacant property, and per the current EPP land use designation may be redeveloped as a mixed-use industrial business district. This area is also notable in that its peninsular geography provides significant waterfront and open space access and views, which make it enticing to potential development interests.

## IV. Streetscapes

### West Subarea

The Embarcadero is one of the most significant streets in the Plan Area. In addition to serving as an important truck route, it benefits from an attractive location in proximity to the Estuary shoreline. The Estuary Policy Plan states, “Policy SAF-9: Provide a continuous Embarcadero parkway from Ninth Avenue to Damon Slough” and continues, “The Embarcadero Parkway should be developed as a recreational street, providing access to the diverse waterfront experiences that exist in the San Antonio-Fruitvale District.” In the west Subarea, this improvement has begun on sections of the Embarcadero that front onto Union Point Park. However, through Embarcadero Cove views and access to the waterfront are obscured by fences and buildings in some areas, and generally the street itself does not reflect a high quality of design attention. Future street design and redevelopment in this area should maintain its important ability to serve trucks, while prioritizing the creation of a more pedestrian oriented environment, with signage or other features to draw attention to the adjacent public space, restaurants, and other attractive features that highlight the presence of the waterfront and related amenities.

Livingston, Dennison and Kennedy Streets run perpendicular to the Embarcadero and connect the industrial areas between I-880 and the Embarcadero to the surrounding circulation network. These streets and the smaller streets that connect to them reflect auto, and in particular truck, orientation as a result of the industrial nature of the area. The industrial facades along these streets further reduce the appeal of walking, biking, or driving on them, as they provide little visual interest or comfort.

### Central-West Subarea

Streets in the Kennedy Tract area reflect the mixed industrial/residential nature of the neighborhood, as they are of equally mixed character. Generally in scale they are typical residential streets, but the lack of sidewalks on many, especially the more industrial blocks, the setbacks fronting on others, and the formalized planted streetscapes along the newer residential properties reflect a mix of treatments paralleled only by the mix of design and building styles of the adjacent properties. Landscaping is highly inconsistent, many sidewalks are entirely lacking or have cars parked on them, and there are few pedestrian amenities within the neighborhood. Recent improvements on some blocks of Derby Avenue and Ford Street set a good precedent for high quality neighborhood streets, and planned streetscape improvements on Glascock, as discussed under Planned Improvements, will hopefully reflect the same.

### Central-East Subarea

Fruitvale Avenue and High Street are each major auto corridors that connect Alameda Island to I-880 and their design reflects this purely functional orientation, with little aesthetic consideration. The streets have sparse landscaping or streetscape improvements and provide few signalized pedestrian crossings. Additionally, the existing sidewalk, highway and railway crossings provide minimal comfort or visual interest to roadway users of any kind, especially pedestrians. Because Fruitvale Avenue is an important connection to the Fruitvale BART station, a higher level of accommodation of pedestrians and bicycles and improved aesthetics are warranted, but there is no notable signage or design treatment to indicate the presence or importance of this connection.

Alameda Avenue is a major street that connects across the Subarea between Fruitvale Avenue and High Street. Ample space and low traffic volumes provide the space to create a high quality multi-modal street with spacious accommodation of all travel modes in addition to landscaping and other aesthetic street improvements.

## East Subarea

Streets in this Subarea are reflective of their industrial use, and there is little to no design consideration of pedestrians or consideration of street aesthetics for any user. Most streets include no sidewalks or landscaping.

Tidewater Avenue provides access to a number of businesses and an increasingly significant regional park. However, Tidewater Avenue is not a public right-of-way and currently has limited right-of-way, little pedestrian accommodation, and includes no signage for the park or any indication to a driver, cyclist, or pedestrian that such a resource lies nearby. Tidewater Avenue is a series of privately-owned parcels with a non-exclusive 50-foot wide driveway easement that has been used as a street. The City will have to determine whether to acquire this easement to allow it to improve the street with sidewalks and streetscaping, allowing a potential Bay Trail connection as well as ensuring access to the EBRPD park facilities, or whether it will allow the private owners to maintain it and determine the amenities and character of the street. The Tidewater Industrial District Strategy Report by BKF Engineers proposed a series of potential cross sections and improvements for the street if the City decides to acquire the right-of-way. Included in these proposals is a gateway monument at the Tidewater and High Street intersection and aesthetic and infrastructure improvements such as sidewalks, landscaping, and lighting. If this area were to be redeveloped as proposed in the EPP, streetscape and right-of-way improvements would be highly desirable, and easement acquisition would likely be necessary.