

Lake Merritt to Estuary Area Committee Review

Summary Presentation for DD Meeting May 20, 2019

This summary considers the area surrounding the walking, biking, and boating areas connecting Lake Merritt and the San Francisco Bay by way of paths and the channel from Lake to the estuary.

Summary: We considered walking and biking, safety, ecology, and esthetics. For boating stretches of the channel, we wondered about practicality, except during extreme low tides. Given the physical challenges and the wildlife present, is it truly worth pursuing water access?

What DD could help fund:

- Repair and improve paths for safe access from Lake to Embarcadero Bridge area.
- Could the currently non-used RR right of way be a “Highline with a view” path? This might be temporary. The pedestrian/bike bridge plan presented at BCDC demolishes this bridge.
- Shore up banks supporting paths near Laney community garden. Evident erosion has already cut into the paths. Is there potential funding from Coastal Conservancy or other source?
- Work to reduce or eliminate the negative impacts of homeless encampments.

What we might advocate for (unsure whether DD could fund):

- Graffiti – especially the 10th street bridge. Vegetation may eventually cover some. Could Laney art students create a mural? Who might take on active graffiti abatement?
- Could the city, residents, lake advocates, or Laney work with the organizers of Sunday flea market to remove or at least greatly reduce litter/trash blown toward the water below the pump station?
- Is there a way to enhance the 1974 sculptures area? Could citizens and the city work with the Museum to replace or restore them, add more to make it into a outdoor gallery, or otherwise make it an art-appreciation destination?
- How can landscaping and maintenance be addressed, with multiple owners, including Peralta college lands, near the athletic fields?

Context - Non-DD Projects near the channel:

- Henry J Kaiser building
- Proposed building at 12th and the channel
- Old school admin buildings (Paul Robeson on 2nd Ave. and Ethel Moore, 11th St., adjacent to 10th St. and the channel). (Currently their fate is unknown once again.)
- Embarcadero bridge
- Estuary Park
- Channel Park
- Laney college parking lot development
- Brooklyn Basin and related projects
- BRT Terminus Point

In-Progress DD plans or being discussed

- At-grade street crossing for pedestrians at 7th St. over the pump station
- County is studying potential boat access to get around Pump Station, along with other plans there
 - Could we instead refocus on improvements to the tunnel, motion sensor lights, fixing the flooding, keeping in better repair?
- Study potential bike to embarcadero bridge (LM2B) (likely funded by non-DD funds in addition to DD funds already expended for planning). At the BCDC meeting it was revealed that design has changed and become more elaborate. Main Public Works person has left the city.
- Improvements to the mudflats (state mitigation requirement), recovery from use by homeless
- Channel art project.