



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

MEMO

DATE: June 6, 2018

TO: Architectural Review Committee of the
Historic Preservation Commission

FROM: Jørgen G. Cleemann, Preservation Planner,
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RE: **Review and Comment for the New Fireboat
Station at Pier 22 ½, aka Fire Station 35
Case No. 2012.0893ENV**

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BACKGROUND

The Planning Department (Department) is requesting review and comment before the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) regarding the proposal to construct a new Fireboat Station at Pier 22 ½. Pier 22 ½, located east of Embarcadero between Folsom and Harrison Streets, is the site of the historic Fire Station 35 (Landmark #225). The proposal would demolish existing non-historic waterfront features and construct a new floating fireboat station and bulkhead wharf extensions behind and adjacent to the historic fire station, which would not be altered.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The subject property, known as Pier 22 ½ (Block/Lot 9900/022H), is owned by the Port of San Francisco and controlled by the San Francisco Fire Department. The property comprises the following features:

- Fire Station 35. Fire Station 35 is a two-story, wood-frame, stucco-clad firehouse that was designed by architect Alfred A. Pyle in a Renaissance Revival style. Purpose-built in 1915 to house a fire engine and serve the crews of the city's fireboats, Fire Station 35 continues to operate in this capacity to the present day and has undergone only minor physical alterations. Fire Station 35 was designated San Francisco Landmark #225 in April 1999. It is also a contributing feature in the Port of San Francisco Embarcadero Historic District (Historic District), which was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2006. The Historic District was determined significant under multiple Criteria and has a Period of Significance extending from 1878 to 1946.
- Bulkhead Wharf Section 9b (Fragment, "Lost Feature"). Bulkhead wharves are platforms that are built on top of piles along the shoreline. Bulkhead wharf Section 9b was built in

1915 as part of a waterfront improvement project that also included the construction of a three piers. As originally designed, this project occupied the entire waterfront area between Folsom and Harrison Streets. According to the Historic District nomination, all of bulkhead wharf Section 9b has been demolished except for the 150' x 60' section on which Fire Station 35 is constructed. The nomination considers Section 9b a "lost feature" that does not contribute to the District's significance. Portions of the bulkhead wharf not occupied by Fire Station 35 are currently used for parking, storage, and as the location of utility connections and boxes.

- North Finger Pier.¹ The North Finger Pier is a concrete structure that extends from the bulkhead wharf just north of Fire Station 35 into San Francisco Bay. The pier provides docking for two fire boats and supports a one-story storage shed. Constructed in the 1980s, the North Finger Pier is a non-historic feature.
- Seawall Section. Fire Station 35 and the bulkhead wharf fragment are constructed on top of a section of historic seawall, an engineering feature that defines the waterfront. The Port of San Francisco's seawall, built in segments between 1878 and 1915, is a contributing feature in the Historic District. The section of seawall beneath the subject property is not visible.

The project site also involves work on the adjacent water lot to the south (Block/Lot 9900/024), which contains the following feature:

- South Finger Pier/Pier 24 Fragment. Pier 24 was constructed in 1915, ravaged by a fire in 1997, and mostly demolished in 2004. The surviving fragment is a ruin consisting of a number of piles and a 1,750 sf section of decking. Pier 24 is considered a "lost feature" that does not contribute to the significance of the Historic District. In the current project description, the Pier 24 fragment is called the "South Finger Pier."

The subject property is located within a C-2 (Community Business) Zoning District and an 84 - X-2 height and bulk district.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the proposed project is to improve the San Francisco Fire Department's (SFFD) capacity for meeting current and future demands for water rescue and emergency response services, including training of staff. The proposal is to demolish the existing North and South Finger Piers and a section of the bulkhead wharf to the south of the historic Fire Station 35. A new, approximately 16,000 sf steel float surmounted by a two-story fire-boat station building would be installed in the water behind the fire station. The float structure would be physically separated from the fire station and wharf by a gap of open water. The float structure would provide berthing for the City's fire boats, living quarters for fire department crews, and dormitory space for emergency personnel during major emergencies. The section of demolished bulkhead wharf would be rebuilt and include an observation area with interpretive signage. A vehicular accessway would connect the rebuilt bulkhead wharf with the new float structure. An aluminum gangway installed behind Fire Station 35 would provide a pedestrian connection between the bulkhead wharf and the float structure. Fire Station 35 would be repainted but otherwise would not be physically altered under this proposal. Some operations currently housed in Fire Station 35 would be moved to the new building on the float. Fire Station 35 would continue to house and deploy a fire engine and

¹ This structure is officially called "Pier 22 ½," a name that has become a synecdoche for the whole site. To avoid confusion, this report will refer to it as the North Finger Pier.

would also house a fitness room and storage areas. The proposal would not disturb the historic seawall.

The project is sponsored by Public Works.

OTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED

Because it does not impact the landmark Fire Station 35, the proposed project does not require a Certificate of Appropriateness pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code. No action is required by the Historic Preservation Commission or the Planning Commission.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed project is currently undergoing environmental review under Case No. 2012.0893ENV. The project is being brought to the ARC for review and comment prior to the publication of the environmental determination, which is anticipated to take the form of a Mitigated Negative Declaration.

PUBLIC/NEIGHBORHOOD INPUT

To date, the Department has received no public comment regarding the proposed project.

STAFF ANALYSIS

In order to complete its review, the Department seeks the feedback of the ARC regarding the compatibility of the proposed project with its historical site, which contains two overlapping but separately identified historical resources: 1) Fire Station 35, an individual landmark designated under Article 10 of the Planning Code (Landmark #225); and 2) the Port of San Francisco Embarcadero National Register Historic District, whose contributing features within the project site include Fire Station 35 and the historic seawall.

Based on earlier versions of the proposal, staff found that the proposed design did not conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (the Standards) due to the use of materials on the float structure that lacked precedent within the historic district. Specifically, staff took issue with the use of a smooth panelized aluminum cladding system and a terra-cotta screen on the outshore end. On further analysis, however, staff found that this use of incompatible materials did not result in a material impairment that would result in a significant impact to historic resources under CEQA.

In response to staff comments regarding the previous design's nonconformance with the Standards, the sponsor submitted the current proposal, in which the materials that staff had identified as historically incompatible have been replaced with corrugated metal cladding and aluminum louvers (see "Standard #9," below, for more information). Based on this revised design, Staff finds that the current proposal conforms with the Standards.

The full analysis of Staff's findings under each of the Standards is as follows:

Standard 1. *A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.*

Fire Station 35 will continue to operate as a fire station housing crew,

supplies, and a fire engine. The area behind the fire station will continue to provide berthing for the City's fire boats. Some operations currently housed in the fire station will be relocated to the new float structure, but the combined assemblage of buildings will continue to operate as it has historically.

Standard 2. *The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features that characterize a property shall be avoided.*

The proposal will not result in any direct physical alterations to the historic fire station or to features that contribute to the historic significance of the Historic District. The features to be removed—the North and South finger piers and a section of the bulkhead wharf—have been previously determined to be non-historic. The non-visible seawall will not be affected by the proposed work.

Standard 6 *Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.*

Fire Station 35 will be repainted an off-white color that matches its historic paint color. Otherwise, the historic fire station will not be altered.

Standard 9. *New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*

The new construction will not destroy any historic materials or features. The only elements to be removed are non-historic/non-contributory. The new construction will not destroy the spatial relationships that characterize the property. Spatially, the historic Fire Station is characterized as a freestanding building fronting onto the Embarcadero and backing onto San Francisco Bay. The Historic District is spatially characterized as a collection of low structures that acts as the interface between the Bay and the land. The proposal would not destroy either of these relationships although it will change the relationship of the freestanding building when viewed from some angles from the Bay.

The new construction will be compatible with the site's historic resources in terms of size, scale and proportion, and massing. The float structure's two-story height and 139'-4"x52' dimensions are compatible with the sizes of other Historic District structures, in particular the piers and pier sheds with which it is most directly comparable. Similarly, the float structure's scale and proportion are compatible with other Historic

District buildings. The sizes of its windows, pedestrian and vehicular openings, and floor heights are consistent with those found elsewhere in the District. In terms of massing, the float structure takes the form of a rectangular prism oriented perpendicular to the shoreline. This too is consistent with the massing and orientation of the District's piers and pier buildings.

The float structure's size is also compatible with the size of Fire Station 35. At high tide, the float structure will be approximately 7' higher than the top of the fire station, and is set back far behind it. The size of the float structure therefore will not overpower or distract from the fire station. As noted above, the float structure's scale, proportion, and massing are also compatible with buildings in the Historic District; this also applies to compatibility with Fire Station 35.

The float structure takes the form of a long, low building that is open on the ends and features vehicular openings, fixed awnings, and horizontally oriented fenestration on the side elevations. These features are typical of the historic pier structures found throughout the Historic District. In terms of materials, the float structure's steel-plate base and corrugated metal cladding have historic precedent within the historic district, have a horizontal orientation that is consistent with other historical materials in the District such as board-formed concrete, and will be finished in a range of historically compatible grey and off-white colors. The proposed aluminum airfoil louvers on the inshore and outshore ends of the float structure lend a degree of solidity to the building's ends, which would otherwise be fully glazed and open.

The new bulkhead wharf and the features constructed upon it will be compatible with the adjacent Fire Station and the Historic District. The new utility box will be disguised as a sign for Pier 22 ½. New security gates, which will not attach to the historic fire station, will have a simple, open design that will facilitate views of the Fire Station's side elevations, the fire boats, and the Bay. The public art and interpretive signage proposed for installation on the bulkhead wharf platform area are project improvements that are compatible in concept, but should be further developed (see "Recommendations," below).

All new construction is recognizably modern in design and is clearly differentiated from Fire Station 35 and contributing features within the Historic District.

Standard 10.

New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

The proposed float structure and new bulkhead wharf elements could be removed with no impact to Fire Station 35 or the Historic District. Because it could literally be floated away, the proposed float structure

embodies the essence of a reversible addition.

Recommendations

Although the proposal conforms to the Standards, staff recommends that more information be provided regarding the publicly accessible bulkhead wharf features. In particular, staff seeks more information regarding the design of the signage and confirmation that the proposed fence will not be located directly in front of one of the windows on the Fire Station’s side elevation. The “Pier 22 ½” sign disguising the utility box, while compatible, is rather large and should be reduced in size if possible.

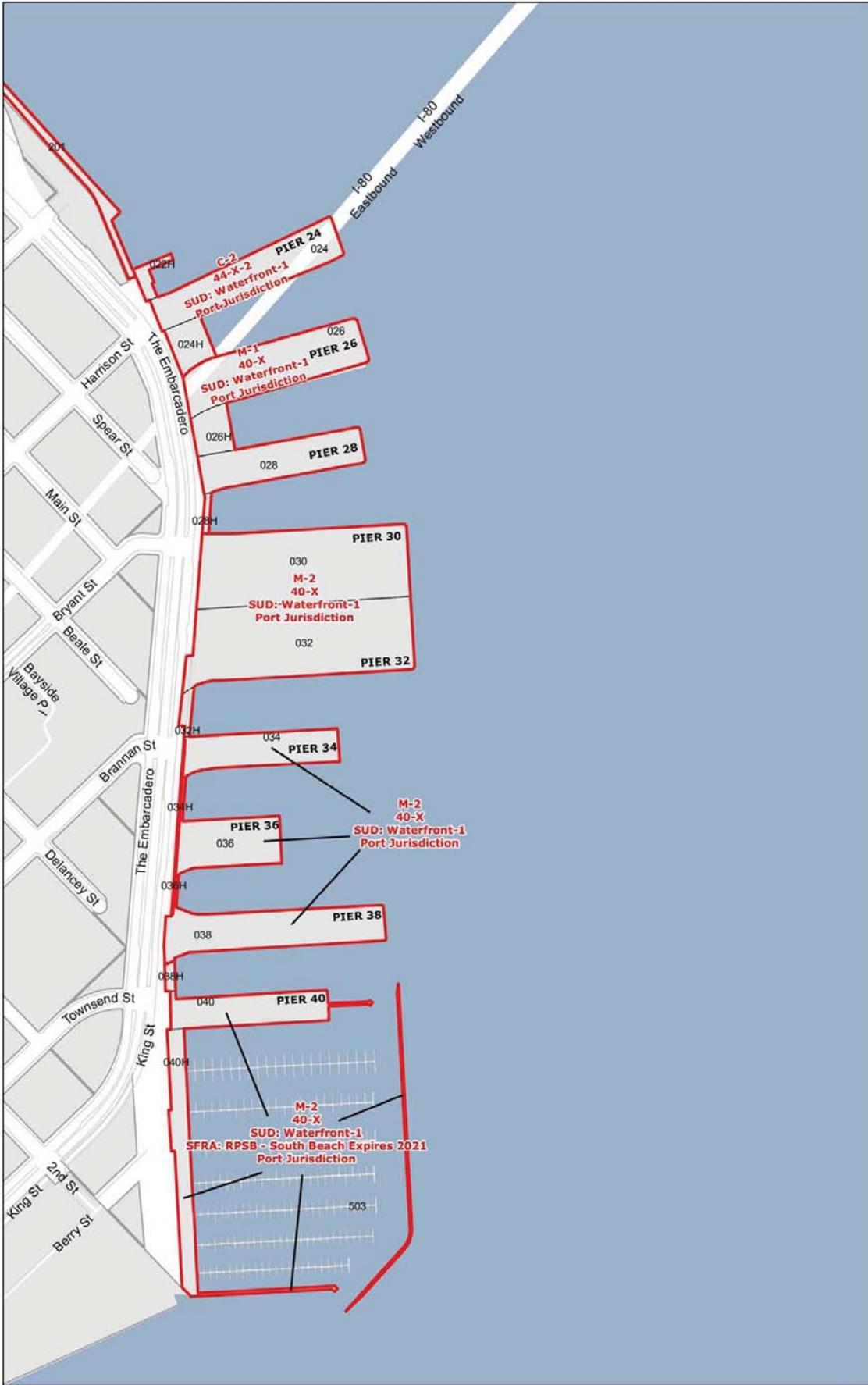
REQUESTED ACTION

The Department seeks comment on Staff’s analysis of how the revised design conforms to the Standards.

ATTACHMENTS

- Block Map
- Project Sponsor submittal including architectural drawings and renderings.

BLOCK 9900



FIREBOAT STATION 35 AT PIER 22 ½

Historic Preservation Commission – Architectural Review Committee Meeting
June 6, 2018



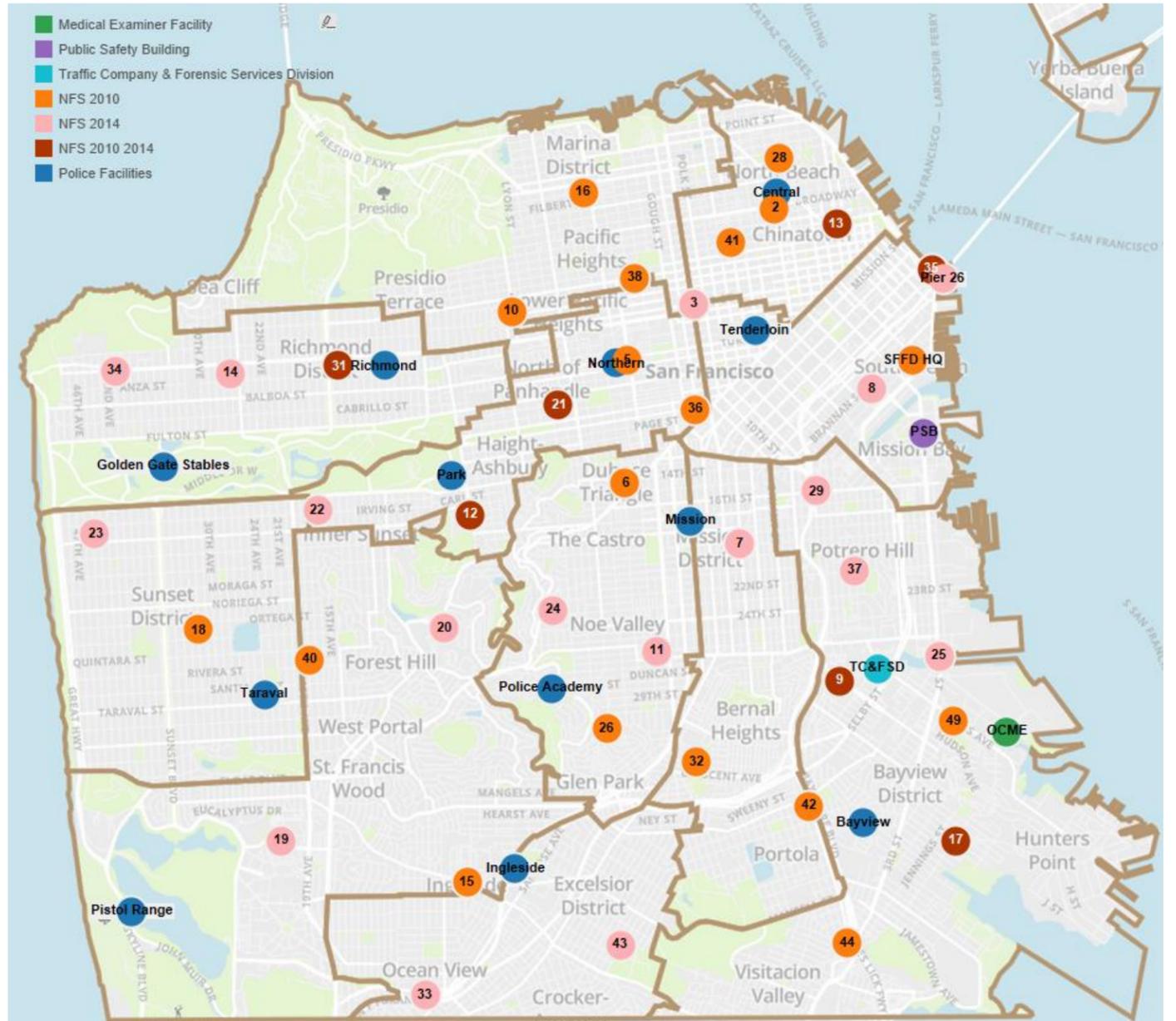
2014 ESER BOND PROGRAM BACKGROUND

\$400M General Obligation Bond authorized in June 2014 with approval by 79% of voters

- Neighborhood Fire Stations \$85M
- Emergency Firefighting Water System \$55M
- District Police Stations and Infrastructure \$30M
- Motorcycle Police and Crime Lab \$165M
- Medical Examiner Facility \$65M



ESER Program Project Map

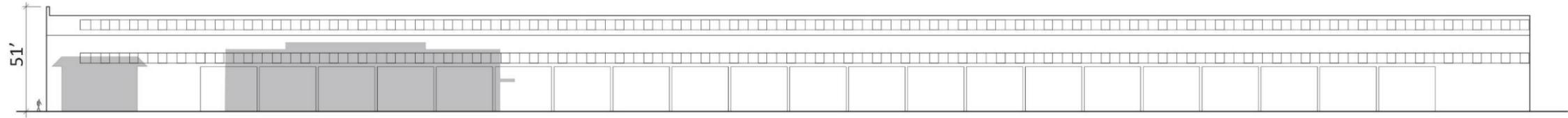


PROJECT SITE OVERVIEW – PIER 22 ½

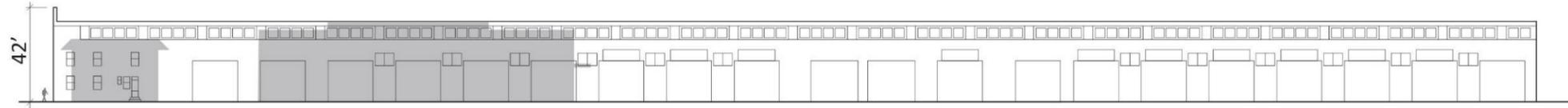
- **Central location** along the San Francisco Waterfront with direct access to the San Francisco Bay
 - Newly developed Mission Bay and Hunter's Point / Shipyard neighborhoods
 - Approx. 2.3 miles to UCSF Medical Center at Mission Bay; approx. 1.9 miles to St. Francis Memorial Hospital; approx. 4 miles to ZSFGH
 - Close proximity to Bay Bridge
- **Close proximity to Historic Firehouse 35**
 - Engine Company No. 35 (2 firefighters, 1 medic, 1 officer) staff the fireboat during marine calls for service
 - Historic firehouse will continue to deploy the engine for landside operations
- **No additional seismic upgrade work to the existing pier**
 - Structural repair, stabilization, and maintenance work to the pier substructure below the bulkhead building was completed in 2009



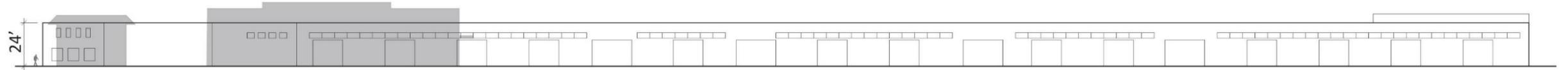
RELATIVE SCALE



Pier 26 - Adjacent Pier



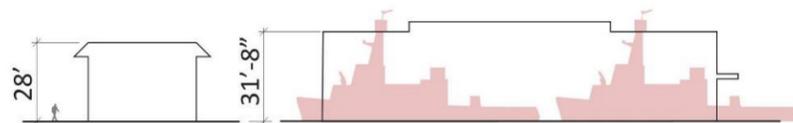
Pier 28



Pier 15 - Exploratorium

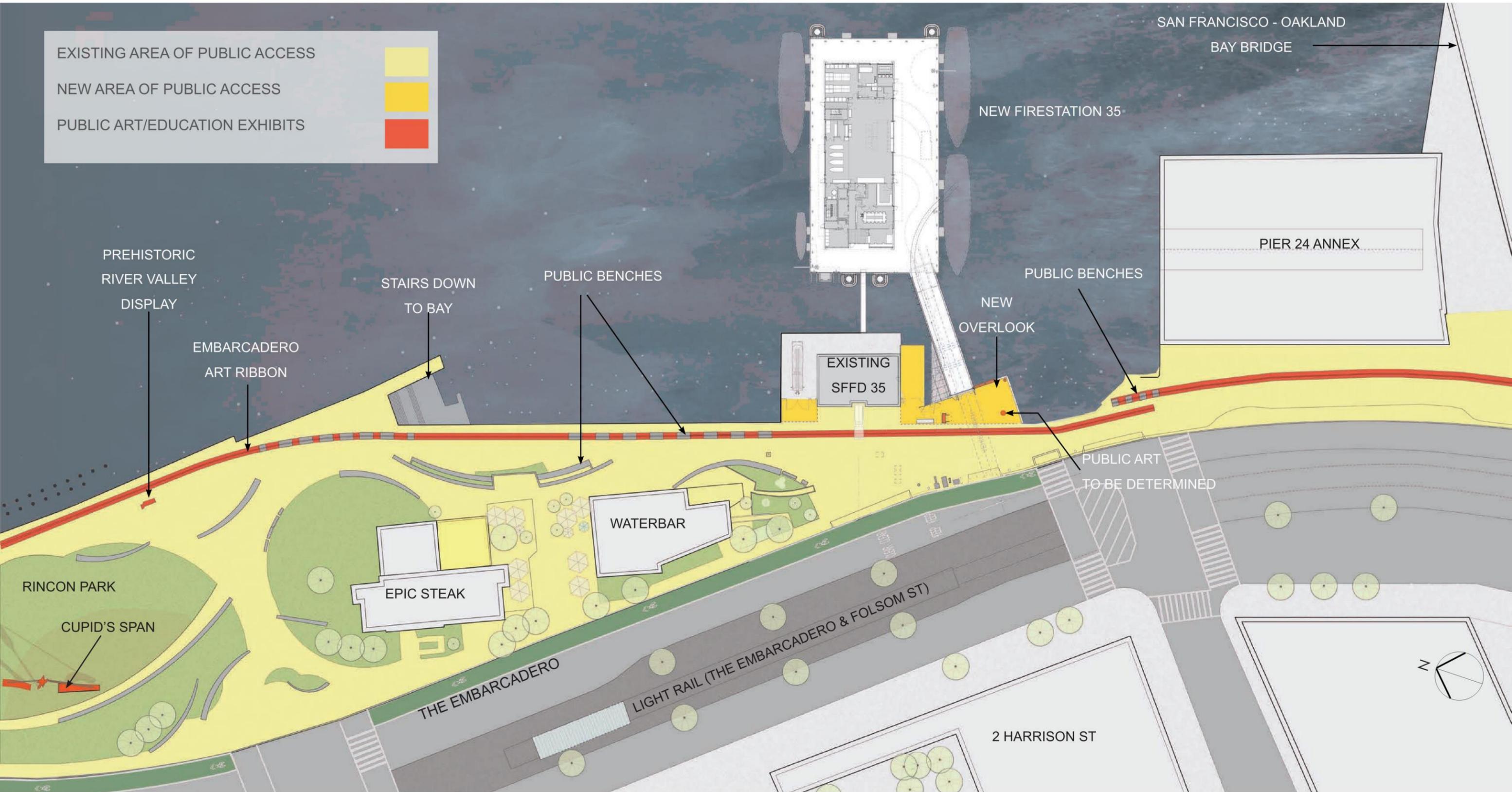


Pier 27 - Cruise Ship Terminal



Pier 22.5 - Fire Station 35

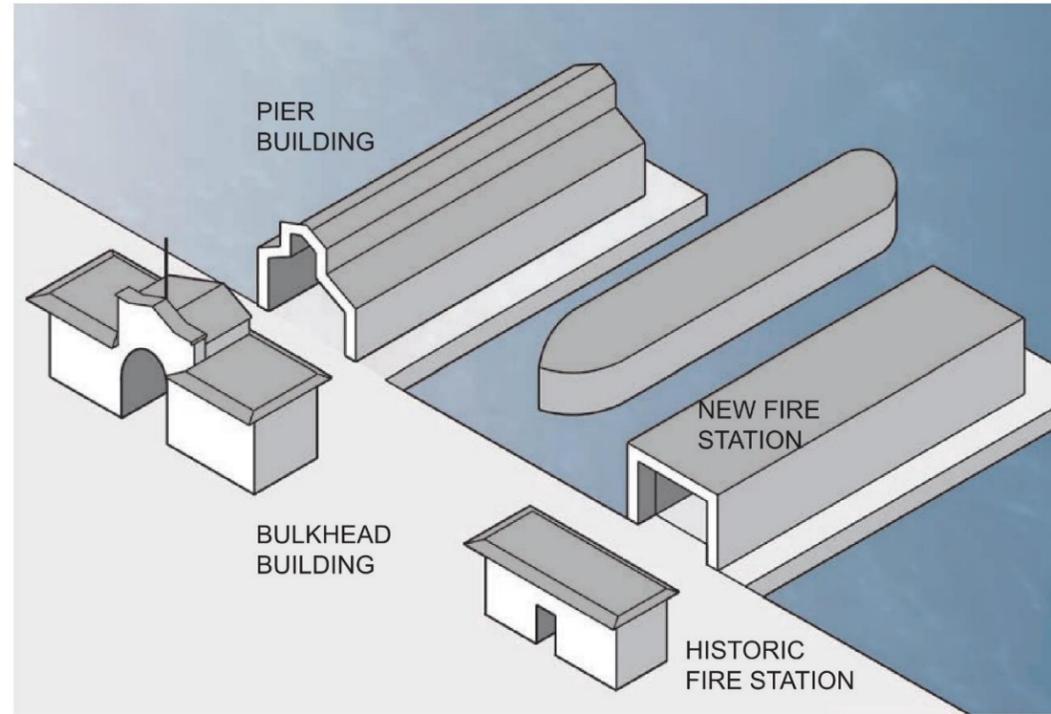
CONTEXT SITE PLAN



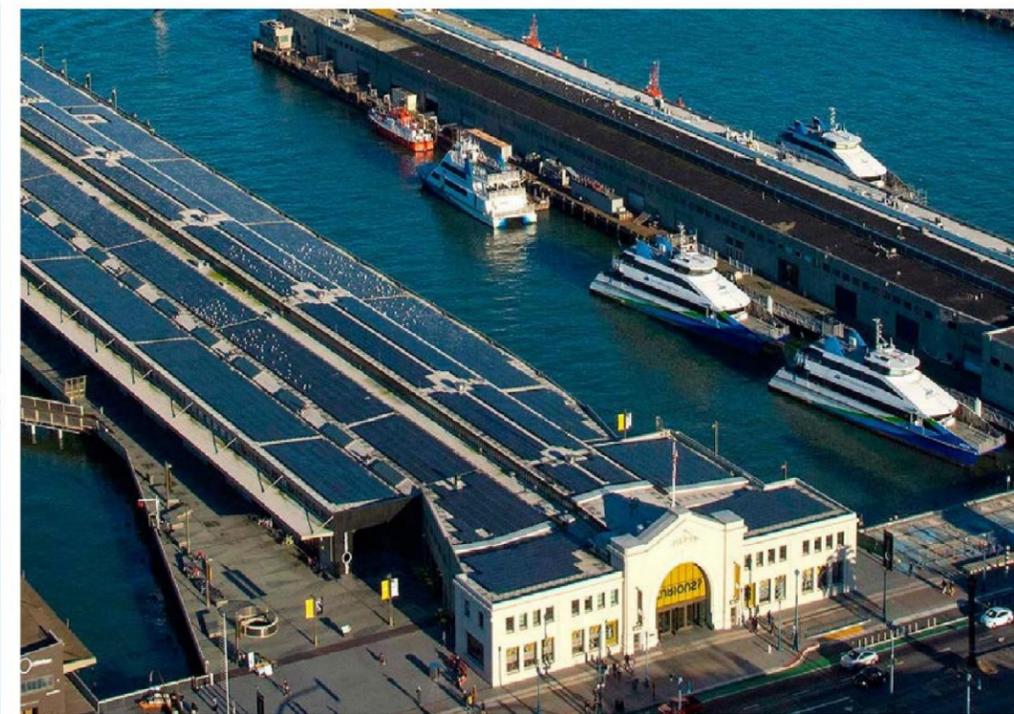
CONTEXT



HISTORIC EMBARCADERO



PARTI DIAGRAM



EXPLORATORIUM (AERIAL)

EMBARCADERO PERSPECTIVE



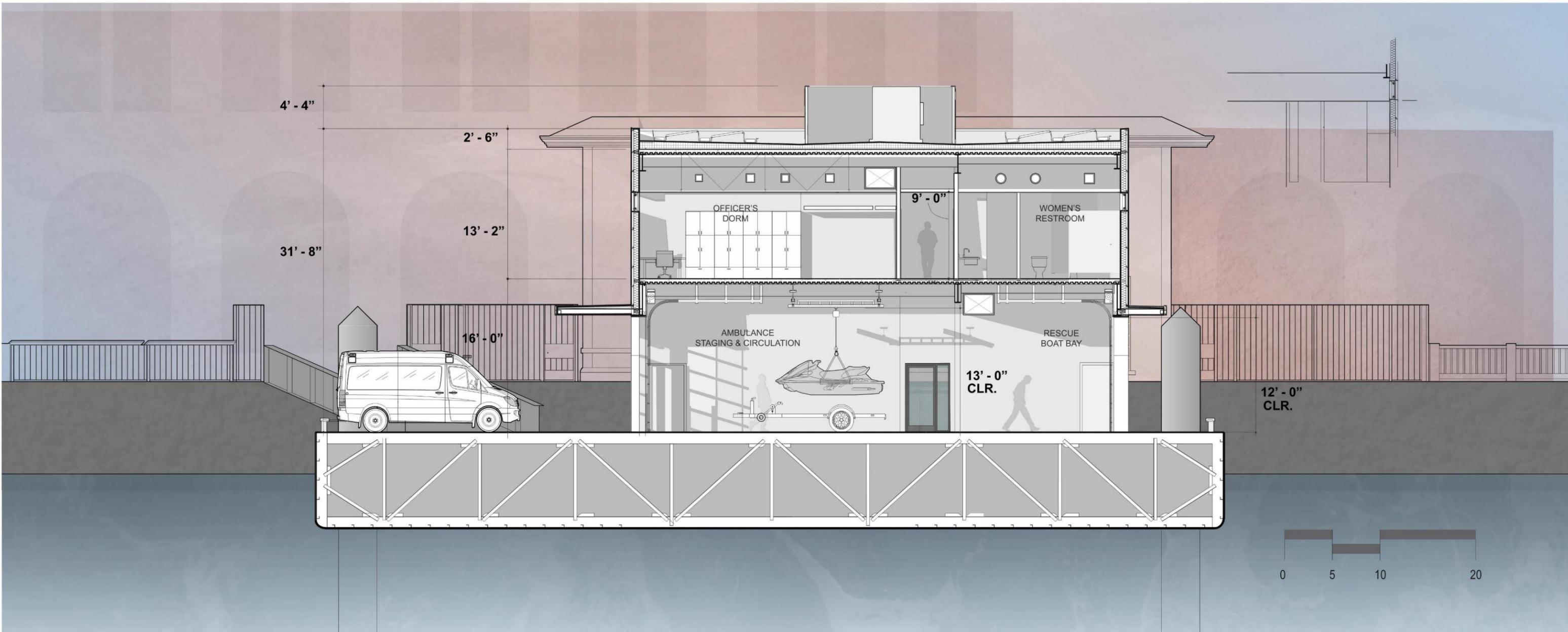
BUILDING MATERIALS/OPERATIONS



WATER PERSPECTIVE



BUILDING CROSS-SECTION



FLOOR PLANS (AFTER)

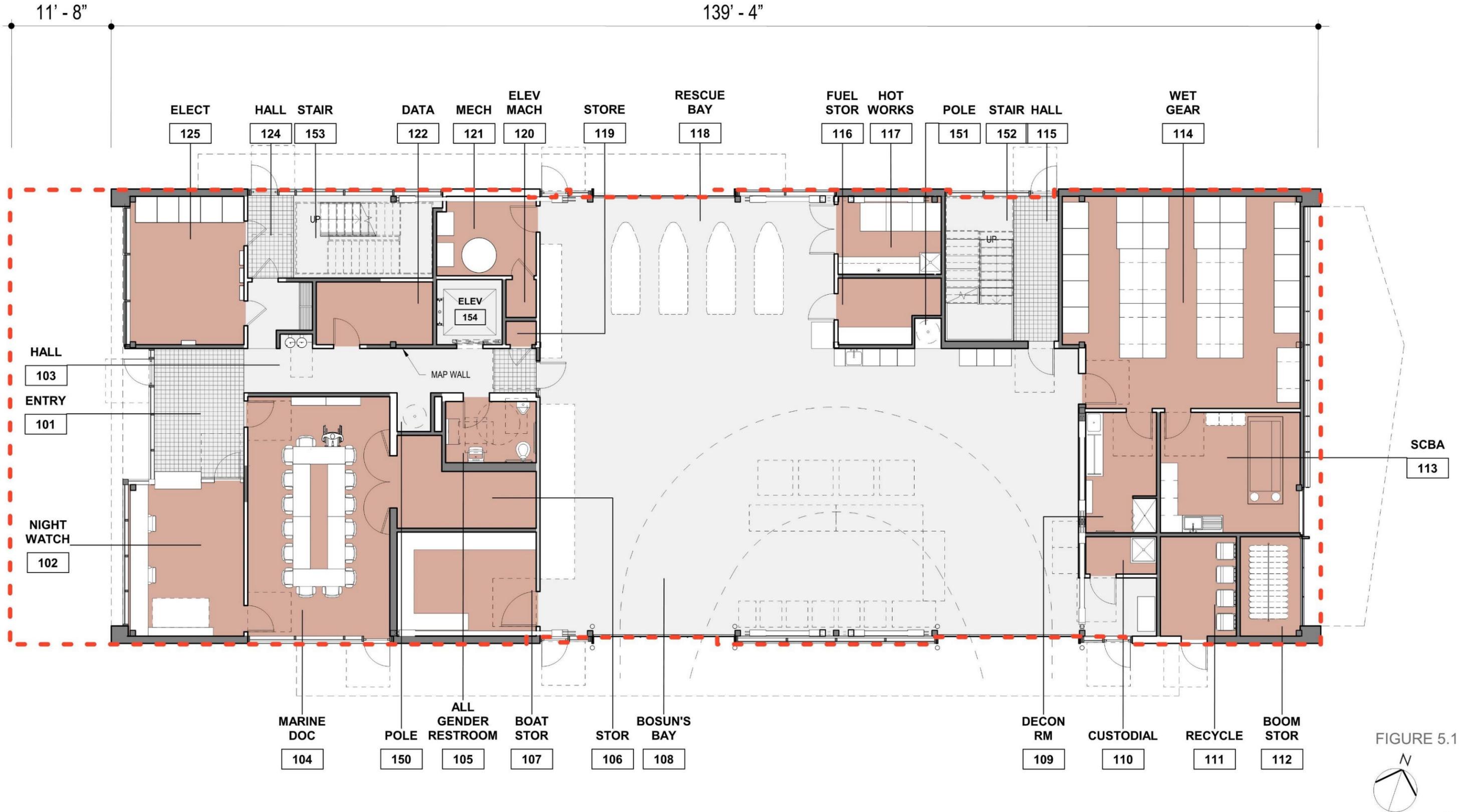


FIGURE 5.1

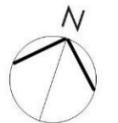


LEVEL 1 PLAN

FLOOR PLANS (AFTER)

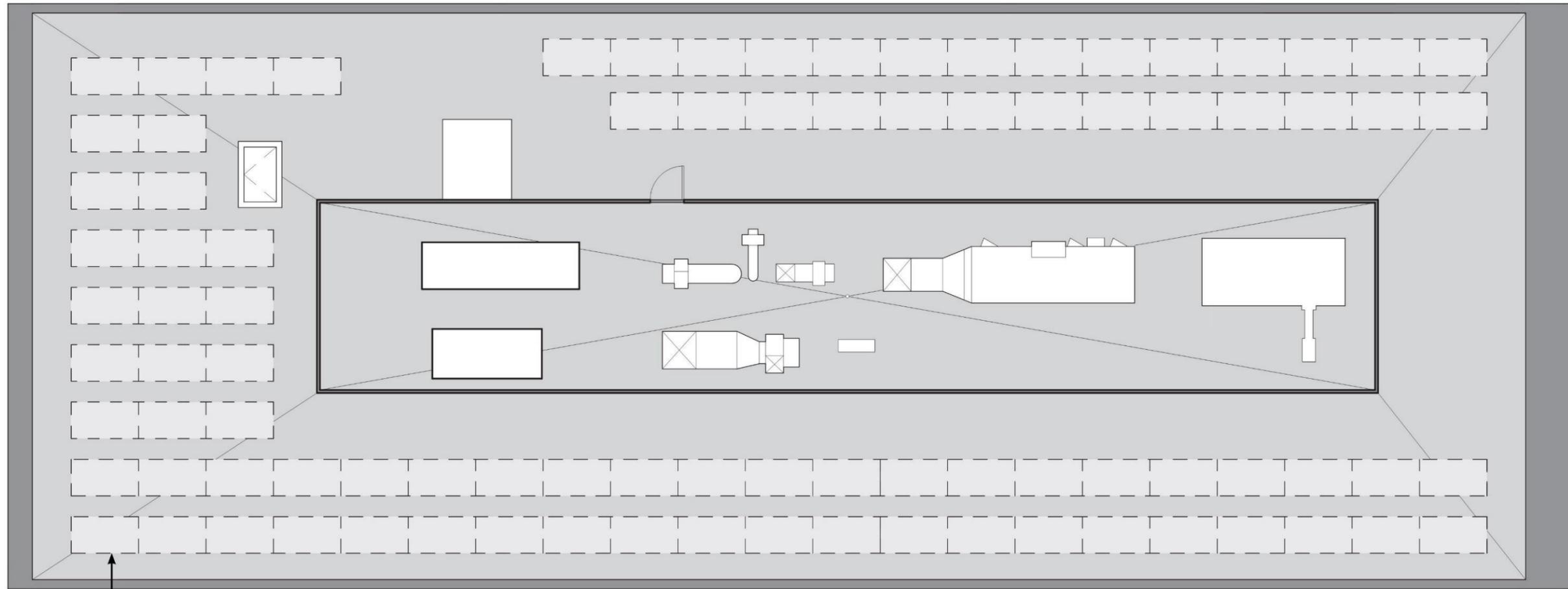


FIGURE 5.2



LEVEL 2 PLAN

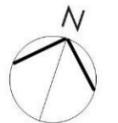
FLOOR PLANS



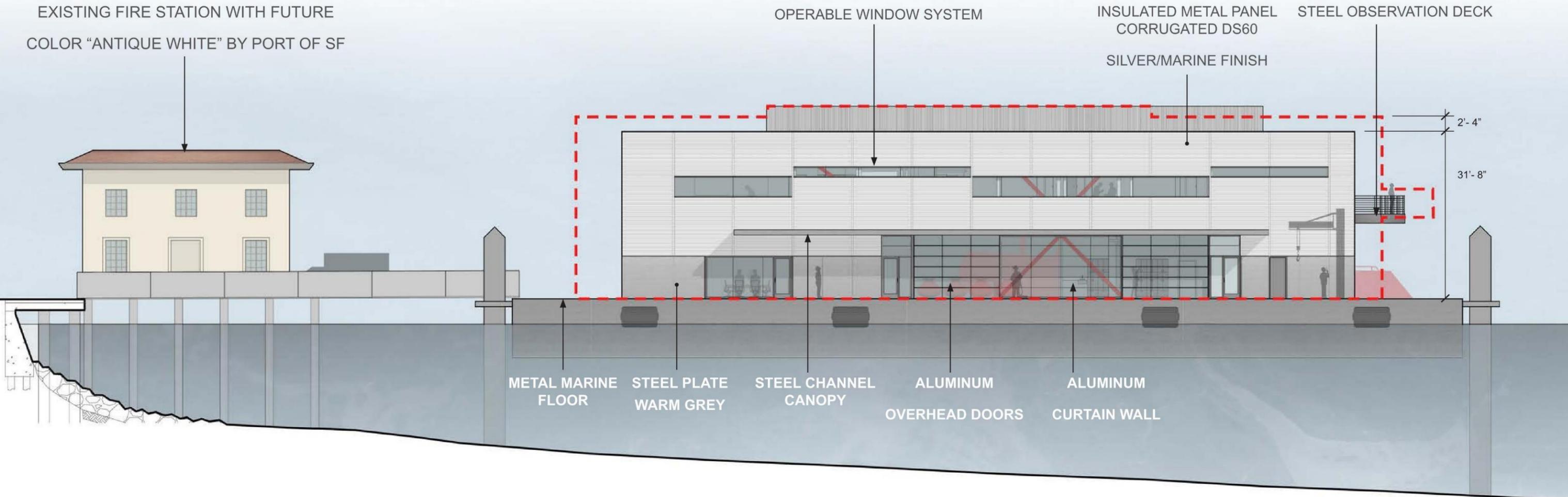
FUTURE PHOTOVOLTAIC
PANELS

ROOF PLAN

FIGURE 5.3



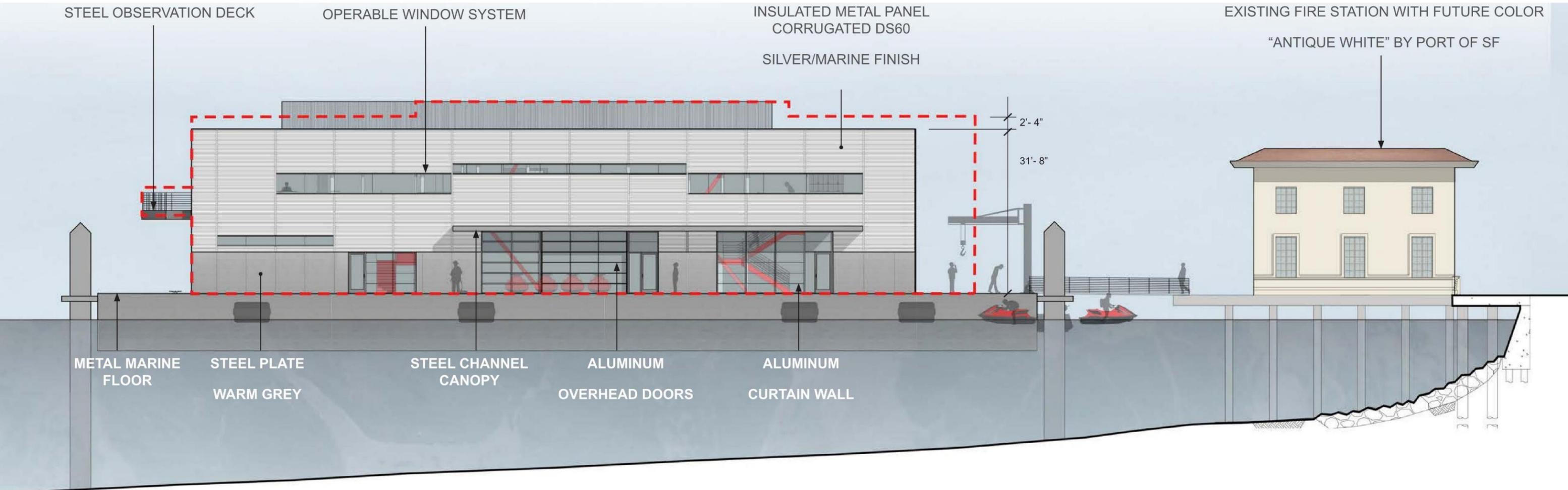
ELEVATIONS



SOUTH ELEVATION

FIGURE 6.1

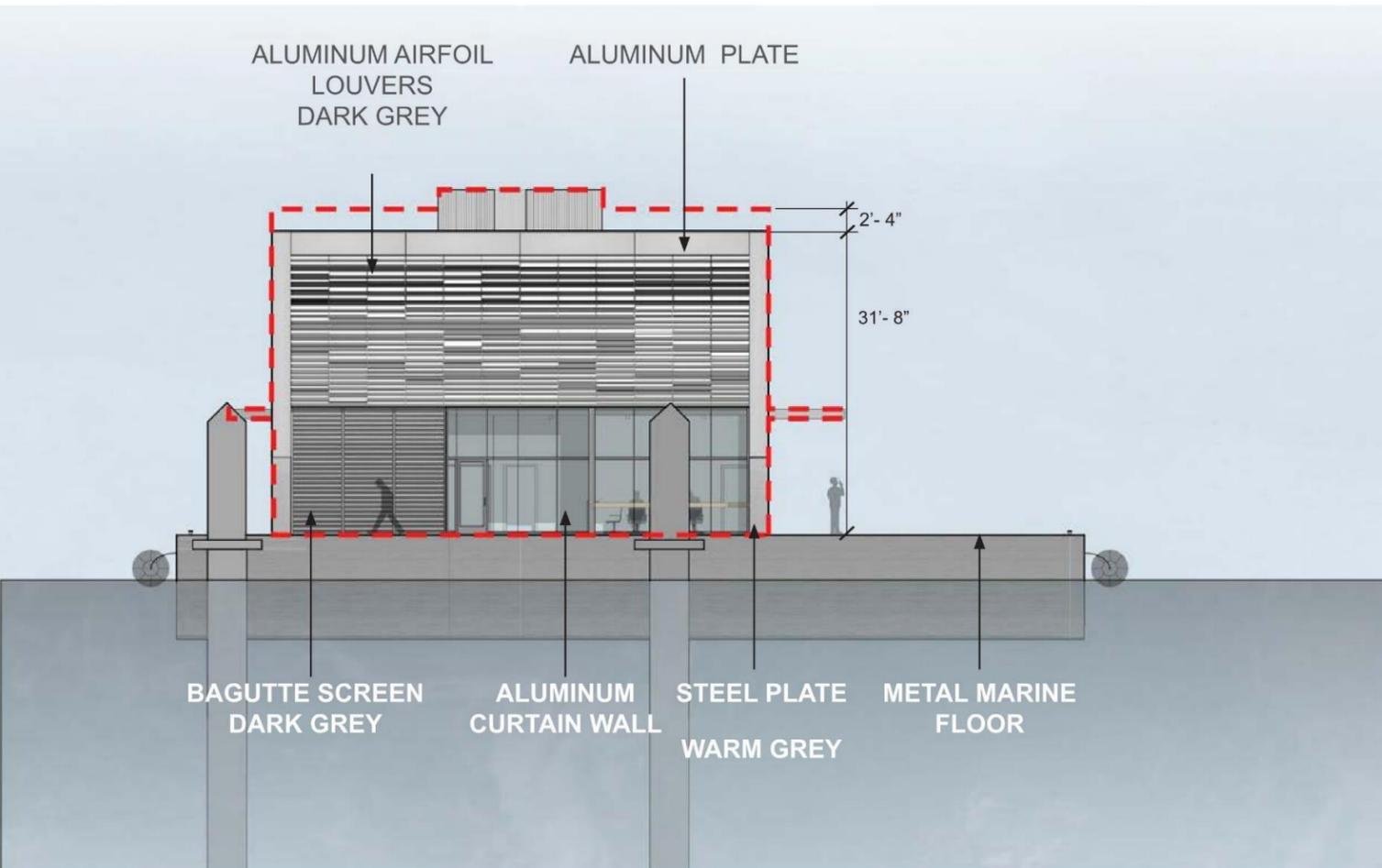
ELEVATIONS



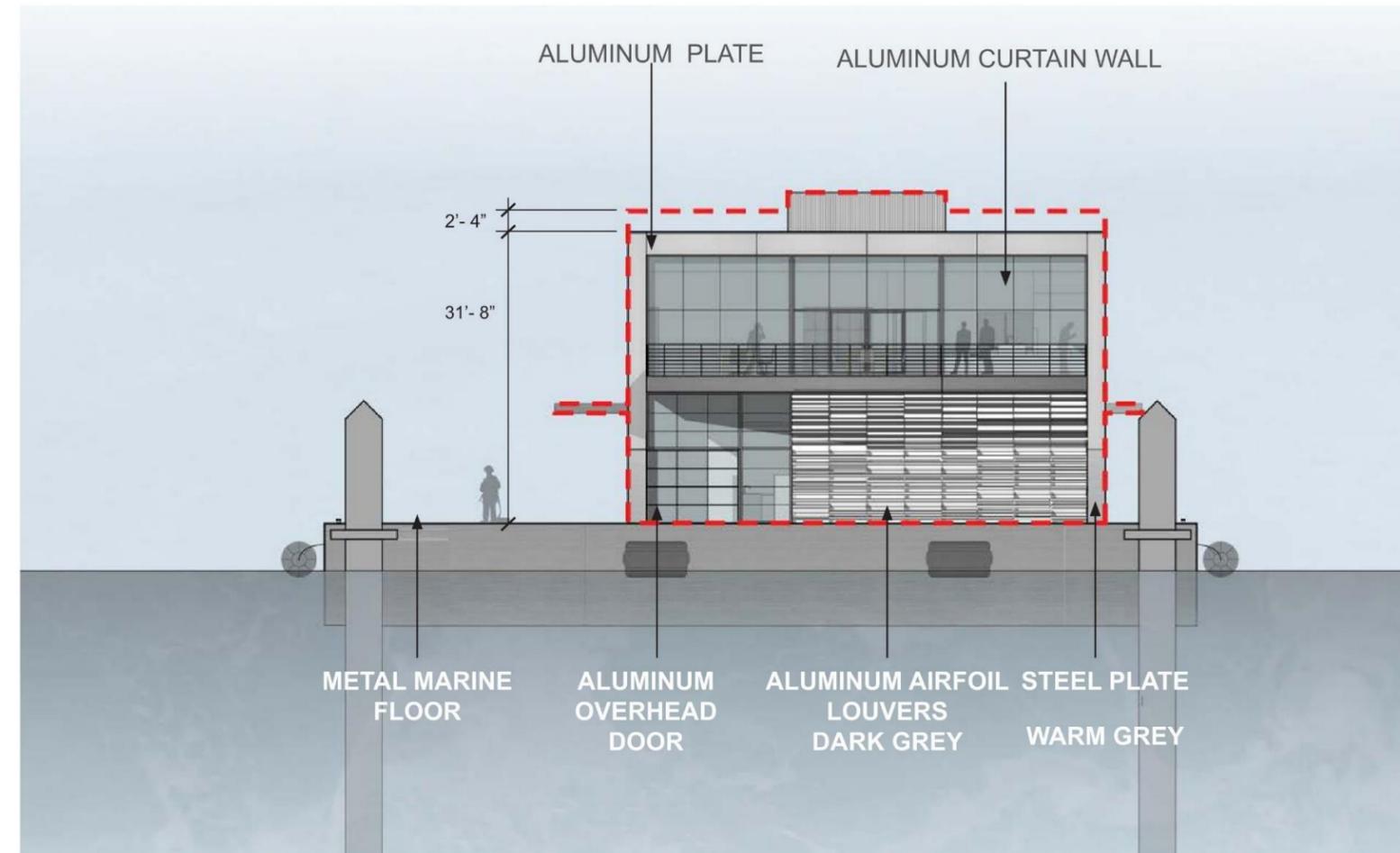
NORTH ELEVATION

FIGURE 6.2

ELEVATIONS



WEST ELEVATION



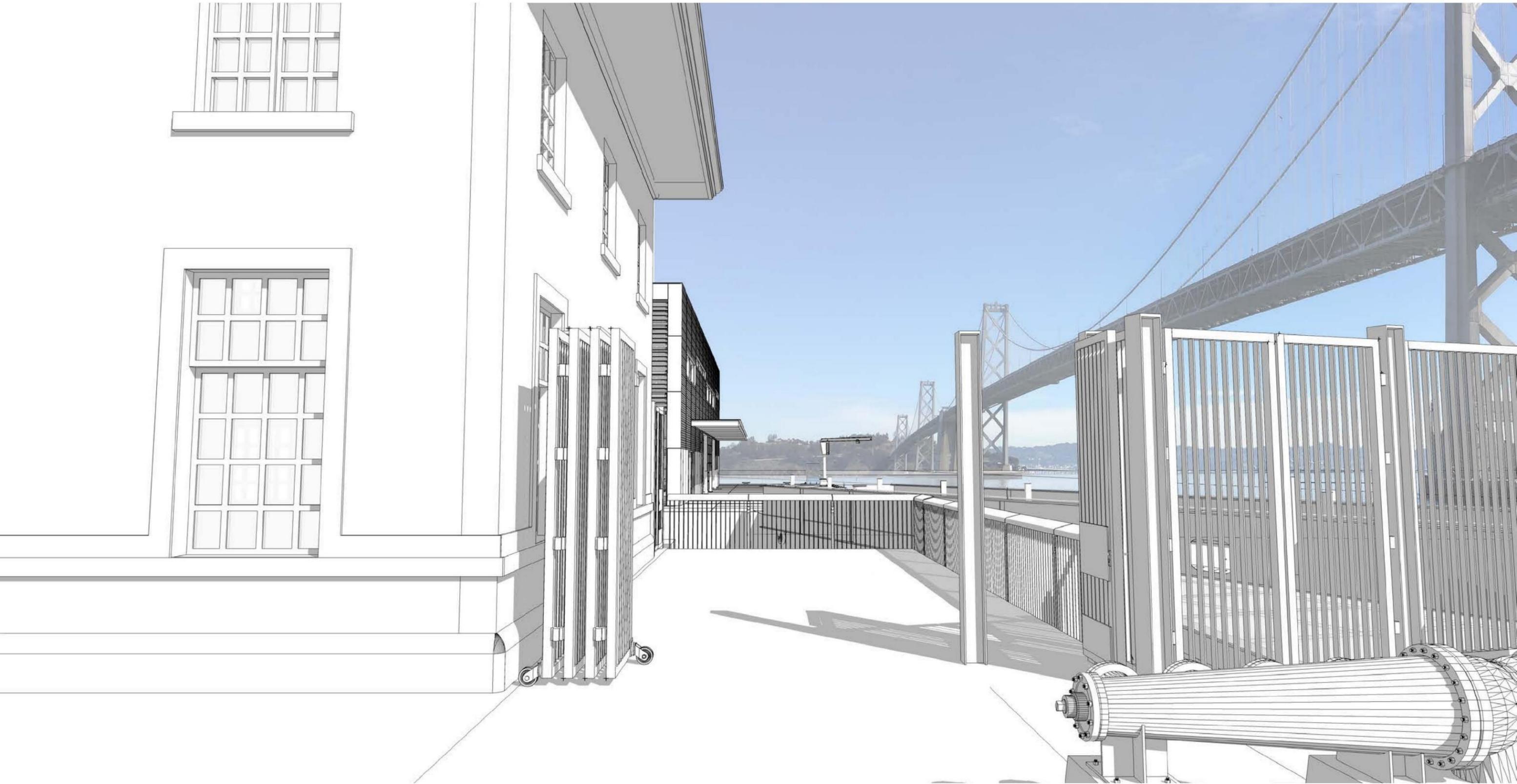
EAST ELEVATION

FIGURE 6.3

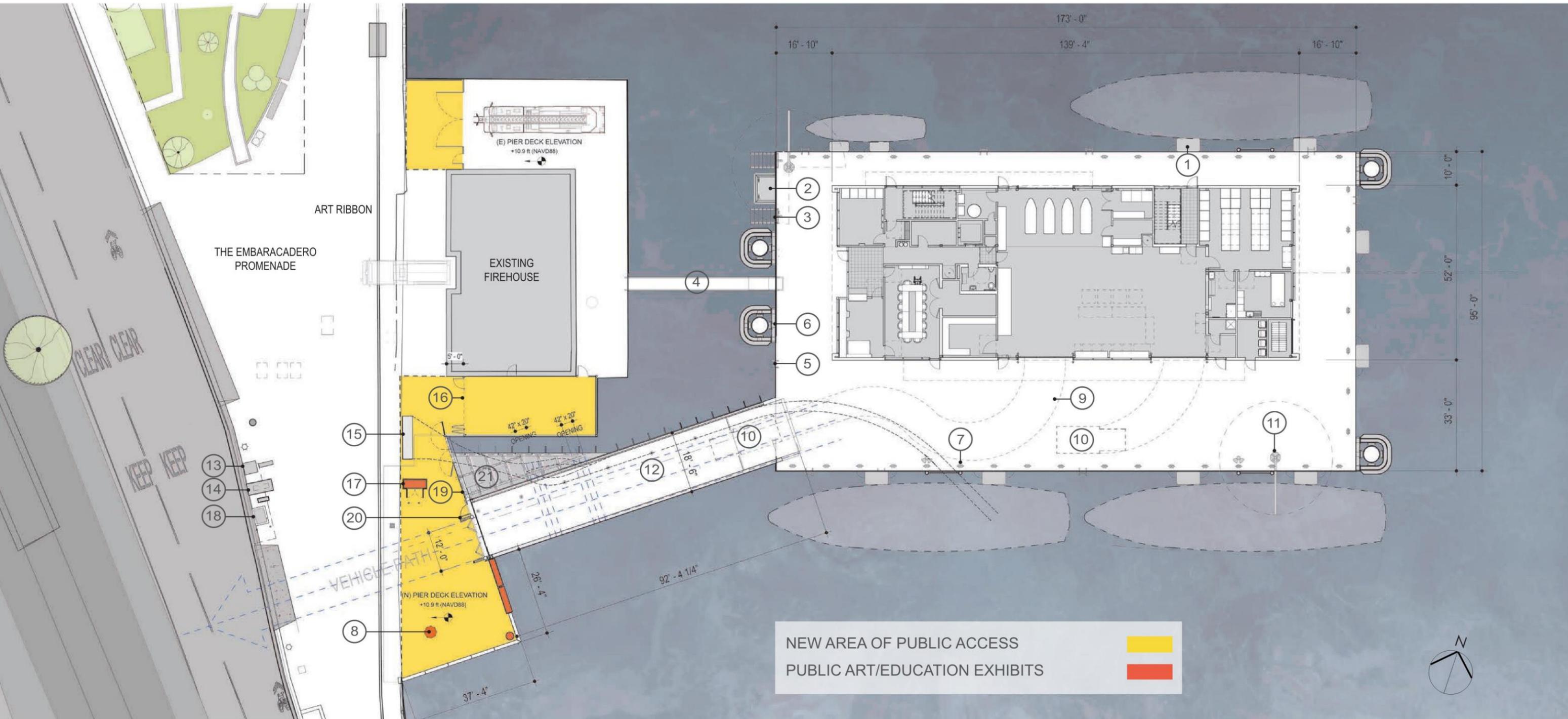
EMBARCADERO (SOUTH) PERSPECTIVE



SOUTH PLATFORM PERSPECTIVE



SITE PLAN



KEY NOTES

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. FENDER | 6. 48" DIAMETER PILE | 10. AMBULANCE | 15. (E) AWSS MANIFOLD TO REMAIN | 19. FENCE |
| 2. LOWER PLATFORM FOR JET SKI ACCESS | 7. CLEAT | 11. CRANE | 16. PUBLIC ACCESS GATE | 20. EMERGENCY VEHICLE ACCESS GATE |
| 3. JET SKI LIFT | 8. FUTURE PUBLIC ART (TO BE DETERMINED) | 12. ACCESS RAMP | 17. ELECTRICAL SERVICE SWITCHBOARD | 21. FIRE HOSE GRATED PLATFORM |
| 4. ALUMINUM GANGWAY | 9. PATH OF AMBULANCE BASED | 13. POTABLE WATER METER | 18. GAS METER MOUNTED ON CONCRETE PAD | |
| 5. ACCESS LADDER | | 14. FIRE WATER METER | | |

PHOTOMONTAGE

EMBARCADERO PROMENADE LOOKING SOUTH (BEFORE)



PHOTOMONTAGE

EMBARCADERO PROMENADE LOOKING SOUTH (AFTER)



PHOTOMONTAGE

HARRISON STREET CORRIDOR LOOKING EAST (BEFORE)



PHOTOMONTAGE

HARRISON STREET CORRIDOR LOOKING EAST (AFTER)



PHOTOMONTAGE

RINCON PARK LOOKING SOUTH (BEFORE)



PHOTOMONTAGE

RINCON PARK LOOKING SOUTH (AFTER)



SEA LEVEL RISE

MHHW = MEAN HIGHER HIGH WATER
 NAVD88 = NORTH AMERICAN VERTICAL DATUM OF 1988
 SLR = SEA LEVEL RISE
 SWL = STILL WATER LEVEL
 BFE = BASE FLOOD ELEVATION (100 YEAR SWL)
 TWL = TOTAL WATER LEVEL = 100 YEAR SWL + WAVE SETUP & RUNUP

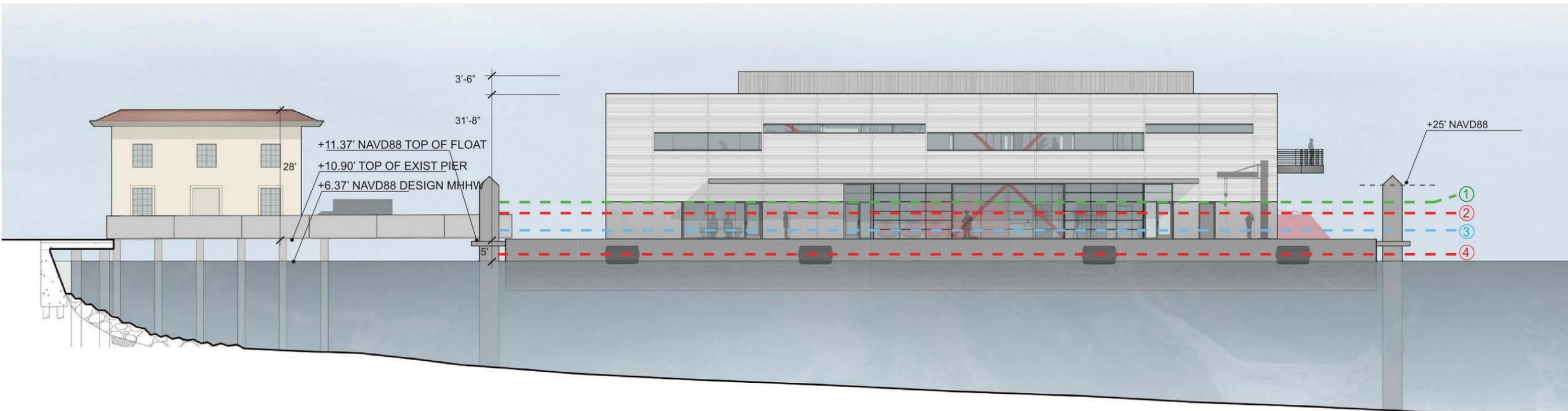
- ① **+16.6' NAVD88**
PROJECTED DESIGN 2100 TWL (80 YRS)
 9.8' BFE + 2.3' WAVE RUNUP & SETUP = 4.5' SLR
- ② **+14.9' NAVD88**
PROJECTED DESIGN 2070 TWL (50 YRS)
 9.8' BFE + 2.3' WAVE RUNUP & SETUP + 2.8' SLR
- ③ **+12.1' NAVD88 CURRENT DESIGN TWL**
 9.8' BFE + 2.3' WAVE RUNUP & SETUP
- ④ **+9.17' NAVD88 PROJECTED 2070 MHHW (50 YRS)**
 6.37' DESIGN MHHW + 2.8' SLR

EXISTING:
 DESIGN MHHW = +6.37' NAVD88
 DESIGN BFE (100 YR SWL) = +9.8' NAVD88

2070 (50 YR PROJECTED LIFE):
 DESIGN SLR = 2.8 ft = 33.6 in.
 DESIGN MHHW + SLR = +9.17' NAVD88
 DESIGN BFE + SLR = +12.6' NAVD88

2100 (80 YR PROJECTED LIFE):
 DESIGN SLR = 4.5' = 54"
 DESIGN MHHW + SLR = 10.9' NAVD88
 DESIGN BFE + SLR = 14.3' NAVD88

LEGEND



EXISTING FIRE HOUSE WITH FLOATING FIRE HOUSE

- NOTES:
1. CURRENT TIDAL DATA BASED ON NOAA TIDAL STATION ID 9414750.
 2. TIDAL DATA ABOVE DOES NOT INCLUDE CONSIDERATION FOR EI NINO EVENTS, STORM SURGE, STORM WAVES, AND WAVE RUN-UP WHICH ALL AFFECT THE LOCAL WATER LEVEL IN ADDITION TO SEA LEVEL RISE.