



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

MEMO

DATE: June 24, 2015
TO: Historic Preservation Commission
FROM: Rich Sucre, Historic Preservation Technical Specialist, (415) 575-9108
REVIEWED BY: Tim Frye, Preservation Coordinator
RE: **Review and Comment for Downtown Ferry Terminal Expansion
Case No. 2013.0100CRV**

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BACKGROUND

The San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority and the Port of San Francisco (Project Sponsor) has requested review and comment regarding the proposal to construct three new ferry terminal berthing facilities, new photovoltaic canopies, and the Embarcadero Plaza, which are part of the Downtown San Francisco Ferry Terminal Expansion. The Project Sponsor has completed environmental documentation under NEPA and CEQA. The project site is located adjacent to the Port of San Francisco Embarcadero National Register Historic District, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and the Ferry Building, which is designated as Landmark No. 90 in Article 10 of the San Francisco Planning Code.

On April 25, 2013, the Architectural Review Committee of the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed the proposed project, and published a letter documenting their opinion.

For the July 1st Hearing, the Department requests review and comment by the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) regarding the compatibility of the current design with the surrounding historic resources, which include the Port of San Francisco Embarcadero National Register Historic District, the Ferry Building and the Agriculture Building.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The Downtown San Francisco Ferry Terminal Expansion is located along the Embarcadero adjacent to the Port of San Francisco Embarcadero Historic District between Pier 1 and Pier 14. The project site contains four existing ferry terminals berthing facilities (Gate B, Gate C, Gate D, and Gate E), the East Bayside Promenade (a canopy structure located behind the Ferry Building), and Ferry Plaza, as well as the Ferry Building and Agriculture Building, which are individually-designated historic resources in the National Register of Historic Places, as well as contributors to the Port of San Francisco Embarcadero National Register Historic District. The project site is located within the C-2 (Community Business) Zoning District with a 85-J Height and Bulk Limit.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Downtown San Francisco Ferry Terminal Expansion includes:

- Construction of three new ferry terminal berthing facilities (Gate A in the North Basin, and Gate F and Gate G in the South Basin);
- Removal of Pier ½ and Pier 2 to accommodate the construction of the new ferry terminal berthing facilities;
- Construction of two new photovoltaic canopies (located perpendicular to Gates E, F, and G);
- Construction of the new Embarcadero Plaza, which would infill an existing lagoon with a new deck and piles and create a new open space between the Ferry Building and Agriculture Building; and,
- Strengthen and repair the marginal wharf between the Ferry Building and Pier 1, and the south apron of the Agriculture Building.

The proposed project is located outside of the boundaries of the Port of San Francisco Embarcadero National Register Historic District.

PROJECT UPDATES & ARC COMMENTS

On April 25, 2013, the ARC published a letter outlining their recommendations on the proposed design. Subsequently, in response to the comments received from the WDAC (Port of San Francisco Waterfront Design Advisory Committee), DRB (BCDC Design Review Board) and ARC, the Project Sponsor updated and refined the proposed project. As part of the project update, the Project Sponsor incorporated new information related to sea level rise, storm water management and the performance of the existing seawall in a major seismic event., which included the following:

ARC COMMENT: New Ferry Terminal Berthing Facilities-Gate A, Gate F and Gate G

Overall, the ARC concurs with the staff determination that the new ferry terminal berthing facilities would be generally compatible with the adjacent historic resources and their character-defining features. The location and design of these new berthing facilities, including their floats, gangways, and access ramps, are located away from nearby historic resources, and are consistent with previously-determined compatible designs.

PROJECT UPDATE:

- The project has been updated to include an extension of the promenade to the gates by 44-ft, thus matching Gate E. Overall, the Ferry Terminal Berthing Facilities have remained the same.

ARC COMMENT: New Photovoltaic Canopies

The ARC concurs with the staff recommendations regarding the design of the new canopies and elimination of the canopy extending in front of the north façade of the Ferry Building. Overall, the

ARC agrees with the staff determination that the design of all new canopies should be refined to better relate to the adjacent historic resources and the surrounding historic district. Specifically, the ARC questioned the function and efficiency of the new photovoltaic panels on the canopies given their location and orientation. Further, the ARC found that the new canopy design would not appear to sufficiently shield passengers from wind and rain, due to the current design's height and upslope. In addition, the ARC commented on the number of canopies and their impact upon the view of the Ferry Building and the San Francisco Bay. The ARC questioned the number of varying design expressions introduced into the area, which would be caused by the new photovoltaic canopies in combination with the existing East Bayside Promenade, entry portals to the new berthing facilities, and other existing site elements. The ARC also requested additional information on the queue time for the various ferry terminals and the justification for permanent canopies. The ARC questioned whether the destinations with longer queues could be moved to one of the other berthing facilities with longer canopy elements. Ultimately, the ARC found that the current design is not compatible with the surrounding historic resources.

PROJECT UPDATE:

- The project has been updated to remove the photovoltaic canopy in front of Gate A and along the side of the Ferry Building.
- The project has been updated to divide the photovoltaic canopy (measuring approximately 20-ft wide by 125-ft long with a 12-ft high clear height and columns 35-ft on center) into segments: 1) Between Gates E and F; and 2) Between Gates F and G.

ARC COMMENT: Embarcadero Plaza

Generally, the ARC concurs with the staff determination that the infill of the lagoon between the Agriculture Building and Ferry Building would be generally compatible and would not impact adjacent historic resources and their character-defining features. The ARC questioned the elevation of the Embarcadero Plaza and requested more detail on the flooding of the surrounding area and Agriculture Building. The ARC would also like additional information on the plaza design, materials and finishes before issuing a final opinion on this aspect of the proposed project.

PROJECT UPDATE:

- The project has been updated to incorporate of a raise in grade approximately 3-ft above sea level.
- The project has been updated to incorporate an elevated curb wall along the edge that would preclude wind-blown trash from entering the bay and assist in stormwater management.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The Department would like the HPC to consider the following information:

New Ferry Terminal Berthing Facilities-Gate A, Gate F and Gate G:

The proposed project would construct three new ferry terminal berthing facilities in an area, which was historically occupied by a number of berthing facilities (capable of holding up to ten ships). The new ferry terminal berthing facilities would match the existing two facilities, and would be located perpendicular to the Ferry Building, as is consistent with the historic use and orientation of these facilities.

As designed, the proposed new ferry terminal berthing facilities appear to be compatible with the surrounding historic district and adjacent landmark in its location, orientation and design. These new facilities appear to be based upon the existing gates and canopies (Gate B and Gate E), which have been previously determined to be compatible with the surrounding historic district.

While it is clear that the proposed new ferry terminal berthing facilities would be differentiated as defined by Rehabilitation Standard #9, the design of the new ferry terminal berthing facilities (inclusive of the gates) do reference the district's character-defining features (including the steel trusses, materials, and arched design), thus providing for a measure of compatibility with the surrounding historic district. The Department recognizes the contemporary design of the proposed berthing facilities, as related to the surrounding historic district, and finds it to be on balance compliant with Rehabilitation Standard #9 and the other Rehabilitation Standards.

Recommendation:

As designed, the Department finds them generally compatible with the surrounding historic district and its character-defining features.

New Photovoltaic Canopies:

Gate E, F & G: A new photovoltaic canopy would be constructed in two segments perpendicular to Gates E, F and G, behind the Agriculture Building. It is clear that the proposed photovoltaic canopies are differentiated as defined by Rehabilitation Standard #9.

Recommendation:

Overall, the Department recommends refining the design of the new photovoltaic canopies to better integrate them with the surrounding historic district and adjacent landmark. The refined design should consider a more slender profile for the new supporting posts and columns, and should provide additional justification for compatibility of the proposed materials with the Ferry Building and Agriculture Building. The Department would also recommend a more solid termination to the canopy edge, rather than a glazed open edge.

In addition, the project analysis would benefit from additional views of the canopies against the east side of the Agricultural Building looking south. These additional views would assist in examining the canopies relative to the surrounding context and Agriculture Building.

Embarcadero Plaza:

The Embarcadero Plaza would be created by infilling the lagoon between the Agriculture Building and Ferry Building with a new top surface, deck and piles. The new plaza would be consistent with the surrounding hardscape. The new plaza would have a similar character as the existing landscape around the Ferry Building and Agriculture Building.

As designed, the Embarcadero Plaza appears to be compatible with the surrounding historic district and adjacent landmark, since this aspect of the project would be restorative in nature. As evidenced by the historical diagrams illustrating the physical changes along the South Basin, this lagoon was once infilled and is the former site of the Ferry Building Extension, which has since been demolished. The infill of the lagoon would assist in restoring a portion of the district back to its historical configuration.

Recommendation:

As designed, the Department finds the Embarcadero Plaza to be generally compatible with the surrounding historic district and its character-defining features, since it assists in restoring the spatial configuration of a portion of the district. The Embarcadero Plaza features materials and finishes, which are consistent with the existing material palette of the surrounding landscape; therefore, this aspect of the project is compatible with the surrounding historic district and historic resources.

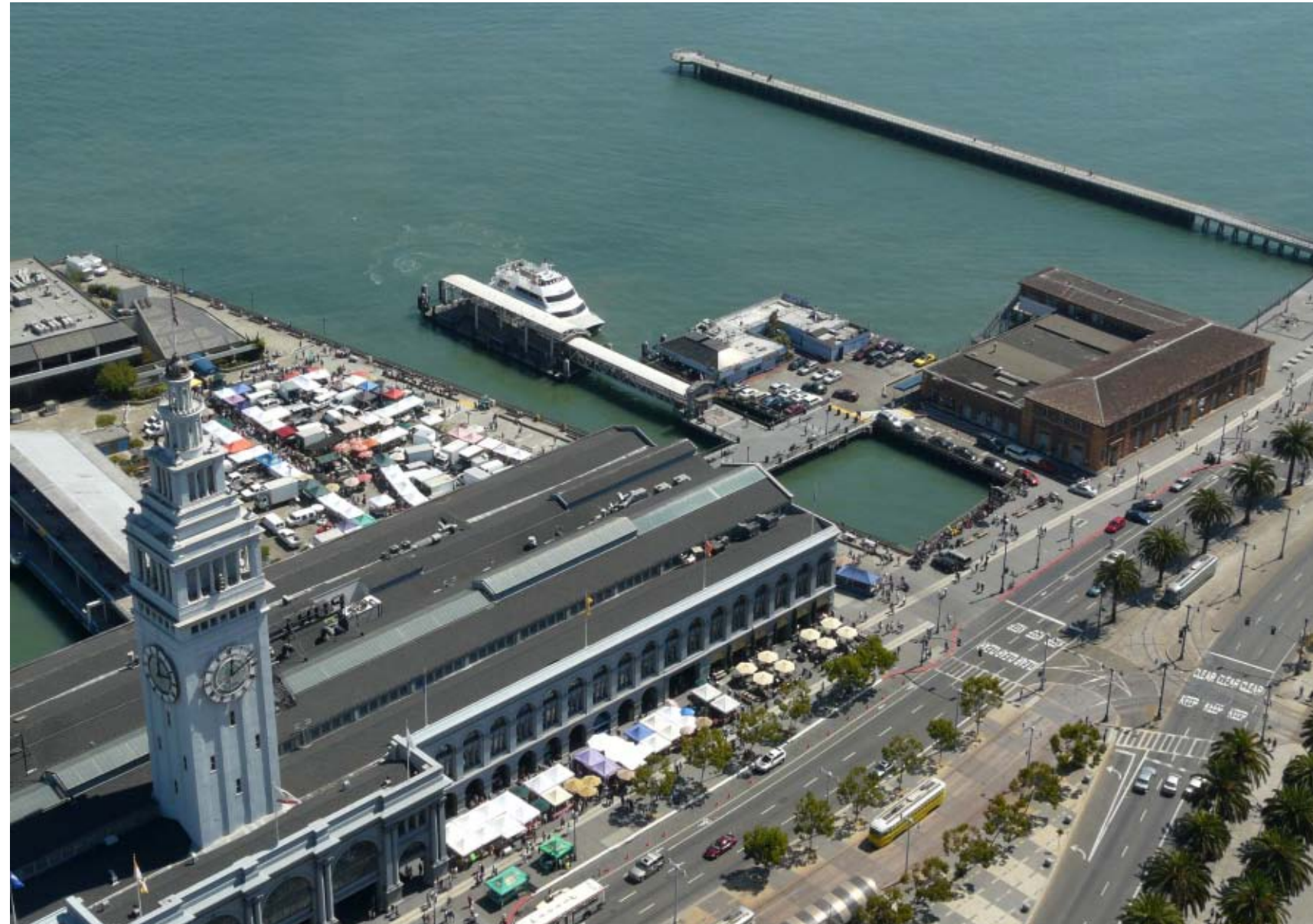
REQUESTED ACTION

Specifically, the Department seeks comments on:

- Compatibility of the new construction with the adjacent historic resources, including:
 - New Ferry Terminal Berthing Facilities;
 - New Photovoltaic Canopies; and,
 - Embarcadero Plaza, located between the Ferry Building and Agriculture Building.

ATTACHMENTS

- *South Basin Ferry Terminal Design Project-Historic Preservation Commission Submittal, July 1, 2015*



South Basin Ferry Terminal Design Project

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION SUBMITTAL

Prepared for the Water Emergency Transportation Authority and the Port of San Francisco by ROMA Design Group in association with Moffatt & Nichol and associated consultants

JULY 1, 2015

SOUTH BASIN DESIGN PROJECT

SAN FRANCISCO DOWNTOWN FERRY TERMINAL

OVERVIEW

The Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA) in collaboration with the Port of San Francisco has spent the past couple of years developing a Master Plan for the Downtown Ferry Terminal Expansion Project. The Master Plan included three new berths and a number of landside improvements that would serve not only ferry passengers and the needs for emergency response but also for public access and general use and enjoyment of the bay. WETA completed environmental documentation under NEPA and CEQA which was reviewed by local, regional and federal agencies and certified. Subsequent to this effort, WETA decided to proceed with final design and construction of the South Basin, where currently Gate E is located, and to expand this area to include two new gates – Gates F and G. The project includes the demolition of Pier 2, where Sinbad's is currently located, the extension of the bayside promenade on the east side of the Ferry Building, and the infill of the lagoon area to create a new Embarcadero Plaza. All of these improvements are being accomplished in a manner that will not preclude, but enhance, opportunities for the historic renovation and adaptive reuse of the Agriculture Building.

On April 17, 2013, the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) of the Historic Preservation Commission was convened to review and comment on the proposed improvements by the Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA) and the Port of San Francisco. At this meeting, a presentation was made by WETA and the Port along with its consultants, ROMA Design Group and Page & Turnbull.

The recommendations of the ARC were that:

- The proposed new ferry terminal berthing facilities, which are based on the design of the existing gates and canopies (Gates B and E), are generally compatible with the surrounding historic district and its character-defining features.
- The Embarcadero Plaza is generally compatible with the surrounding historic district and its character-defining features, since it assists in restoring the spatial configuration of a portion of the district.
- The canopies should be refined in design to better integrate with the surrounding historic district and adjacent landmark, including a more slender profile for the new posts and canopies and stronger references to the materials and finishes that are characteristic of the district's industrial aesthetic.

A subsequent meeting on June 19, 2013 was held with the Historic Preservation Commission to receive review and comment regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact. Subsequently, the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed the environmental review documents and commented on them as part of their responsibilities as a Certified Local Government (CLG) under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

In the past several months, since the environmental documents were certified, additional refinements to the design for the South

Basin have been developed in response to comments that were made by the Architectural Review Committee of the Historic Preservation Commission, the BCDC Design Review Board and the Port Waterfront Design Advisory Committee. In addition, these refinements have also taken into consideration new information regarding sea level rise, storm water management and the performance of the existing seawall in a major seismic event.

The updated and refined design for the South Basin Downtown Ferry Terminal improvements have been the subject of further review by the BCDC Design Review Board and the Port Waterfront Design Advisory Committee. At a joint meeting on May 11, 2015, both groups expressed support for the overall extent and configuration of the proposed South Basin improvements and the refinements to specific elements that have been made. The DRB and WDAC confirmed the design of the elevated public access areas and plaza and the concept of the amphitheater seating along the edges and expressed support for the creation of two smaller, rather than one larger, canopy. They requested additional consideration be given to how access to the ferry terminal on the south and the relationship between the plaza and the Agriculture Building could be simplified and improved. In addition, they requested consideration be given to how the shelters would respond to wind-driven rain and whether modifications or improvements should be undertaken to improve their effectiveness during rainy weather.

In this submittal, we are providing a summary of the new information and the refined design for the South Basin that was presented to the

WDAC and DRB. In addition, we have also included some further refinements of the design based on the comments received. We value your input and will continue to develop the design henceforth.

UPDATES AND REFINEMENTS

Since the initiation of the Design Concept Plan for the South Basin area, certain refinements have been undertaken related to layout and grading, based not only on comments previously received from the WDAC, DRB and ARC, but also on new information related to sea level rise, storm water management and the performance of the existing seawall in a major seismic event. In addition, concepts were refined related to queuing, waiting and public access opportunities along the edge and how they could be enhanced by a canopy structure that unifies the terminals but is less extensive than previously anticipated.

Design of Marine Terminals

The size, configuration and design of the marine terminals (that is, the floats and gangways) that were built in Phase 1 for Gates A and E would be the basis of the design for the new facilities as well. The goal of WETA is to utilize standardized elements that can be relocated for servicing and/or replacement and that provide a consistent vocabulary for the berthing facilities. Minor modifications would be made in response to new vessel requirements, freeboard ranges and Clipper card ticketing. In addition, the design of the portal gates will also be maintained, because they have worked well in establishing an identity for the ferry terminals.

Grading Design and the Embarcadero Plaza

The updated design plan provides for the 2070 sea level rise for the 50-year life of the facility, which has been determined to be 14.5 NAVD88, or approximately 3 feet above the estimated total water level in this area of 11.5. In addition, it provides for a 44-foot extension from the promenade to the gates to create a better transition for boarding and arriving. This transition is basically the same dimension that exists today at Gate E and that would be truncated as the proposed promenade is extended eastward to create continuity with the promenade on the east side of the Ferry Building. This extension is also needed to provide adequate length at an acceptable accessible slope to adapt the ferry terminals in consideration of future sea level rise.

The concept of the plaza has been refined to respond to BCDC's requirement to build the public access areas in conformance with sea level rise projections. The geometry of the plaza has also been more closely shaped in response to the need to accommodate movement in the seawall during a major seismic event. The elevation and geometry of the plaza also creates a dynamic juxtaposition with the surrounding area and creates interesting new opportunities for amphitheater-like seating on the west and north edges of the plaza. It also clearly establishes the plaza as a staying area and a well defined gathering space, separated from adjacent vehicular movement areas.

Stormwater Design and Management

The updated plan also refined the approach taken to stormwater design and management. Previously, consideration had been given to the use of bioretention flow through planters, located

on the bayside of the promenade deck. However, concerns were raised regarding filling of the bay and the need to identify alternative upland locations. At the same time, concerns were expressed about the elevation and depth of the planters as sea level rise takes place and the need to maintain the planters to avoid the accumulation of trash and birds. Therefore, a multi-pronged approach to stormwater management has been advanced in consideration of the constraints of the setting, the sources of pollutants and the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of the solutions. The physical implications of addressing this has resulted in consideration for an elevated curb wall along the edge that would preclude wind-blown trash from entering the bay, a major source of pollution today. The elevated edge would also address the adaptive need for additional elevation for future sea level rise, beyond the 2070 design year. The strategy also includes other measures including the elimination of vehicular traffic, the prohibition of smoking in the public spaces, the use of high volume trash containers, like the Big Belly solar compactors being used already in Fisherman's Wharf, the regular maintenance and cleaning of the public spaces with vacuum sweepers and shallow depth media filters.

In the passenger surveys that have been undertaken by WETA over the years, the need for some degree of weather protection at the terminals has been repeatedly expressed as one of the most significant elements affecting the quality of service. Although a need for weather protection is highly desirable, it is not the intention to create a fully protected space that distances the patron from the waterfront environment. In addition, just as there is a self-organizing aspect to queuing and waiting, as the volumes of passengers increase and the range of activities on the waterfront grow, the provision of a shelter can not only give that additional weather protection that is desired, but create a method of organizing

queuing and waiting in an orderly fashion and provide for information, signage and even public access systems without creating a lot of clutter. Further, as envisioned, a shelter can also be exemplary of sustainability initiatives that WETA and the Port are interested in demonstrating. Therefore, a canopy has been proposed and was included in the Concept Plan that was environmentally reviewed and cleared for this project. As we are now proceeding to a more detailed design phase, we have further refined how the proposed canopy will be designed and realized.

Canopy for Queuing and Waiting

Recent revisions propose that the canopy be subdivided into two segments, rather than one continuous length. One segment would be located between Gates E and F and the other between Gates F and G. This approach allows the canopy to still help integrate the three ferry terminals and give a better identity to them while punctuating the gate entrances, creating a greater spatial definition of the edge and more diversity in seating and viewing opportunities.

Each canopy is approximately 20 feet wide and 125 feet long and is designed to allow for a 12-foot high clear height with columns at 35 feet on center. The canopy design has been designed to be as slender as possible with all components made out of powder coated metal and/or stainless steel. The roof of the canopy is semi-transparent with photovoltaic cells laminated in glass, similar to the approach that is used at the Academy of Sciences. The canopy will create a dappled shade minimizing the high contrast effect of a shadow. It is intended to provide rain protection when needed, to organize how queuing and waiting would best be accommodated and create a unity to the three terminals while maintaining an inviting place for public access and general use. The canopies

would also help to organize other necessary vertical elements, such as lighting, signage and a public address system, which would otherwise need to be located within the South Basin.

If necessary over time, the canopies could also suggest how queue lines could be formed to provide an orderly assembly of passengers during peak demand periods. The canopies would also provide a protected space for queuing and waiting, that would be preferred to the gangway which has been used recently as a default covered queuing space but which presents safety and security concerns due to its movement and slope. It is important to note that the queuing and waiting function of the improvements is primarily in the 2 to 2-1/2 hour PM peak period departure time during the week. Retail and general tourist visitation, on the other hand, is greatest during the two-hour mid-day period and the peak use, which is significant, is on Saturday, when the farmer's market is in operation. Because these peaks occur at different times of the day and week, ferry passengers and general pedestrians have a synergistic relationship that together contributes to the overall life and vitality of the area.

IN PROGRESS REVISIONS

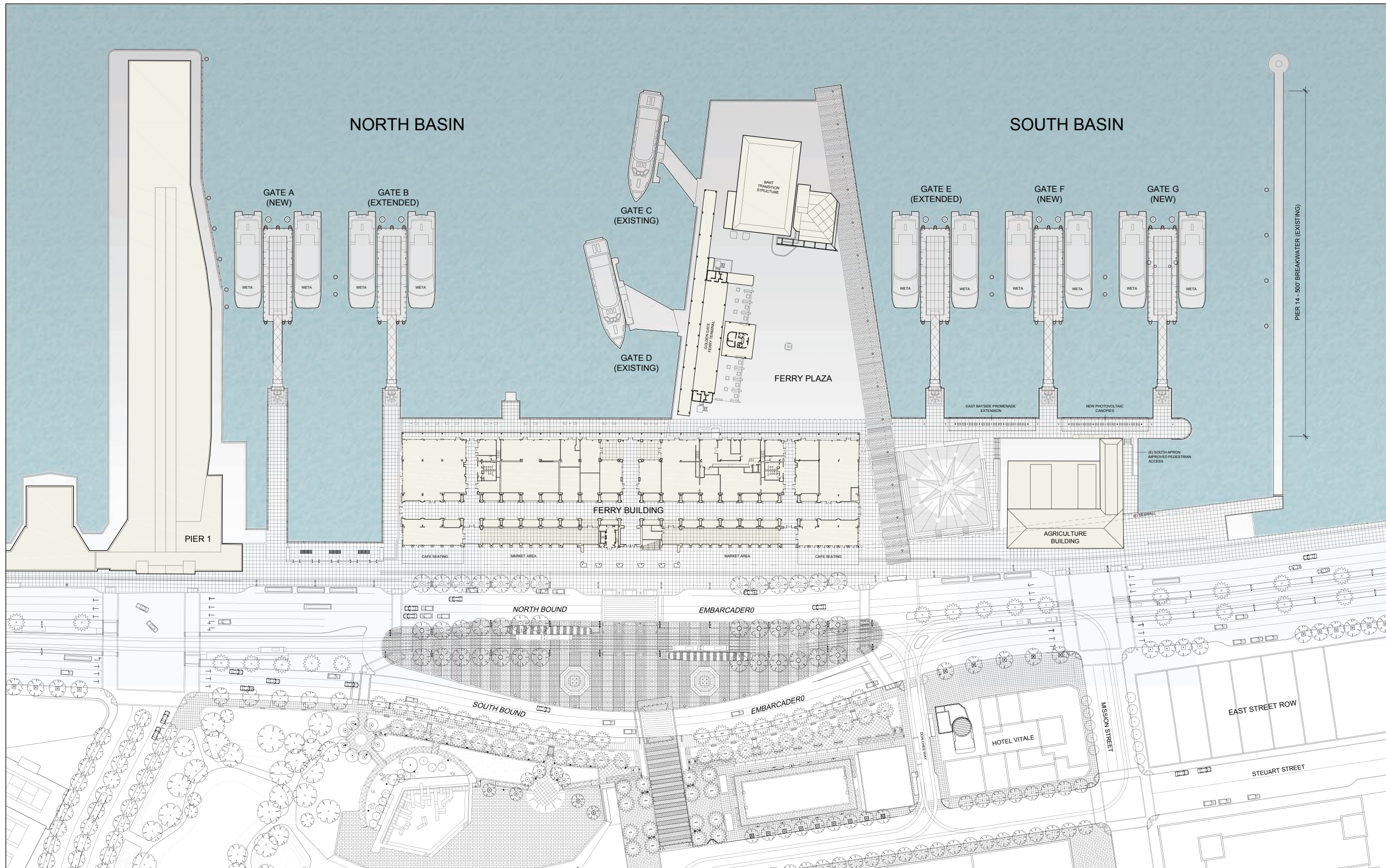
One issue raised by the DRB and WDAC in the joint meeting last May had to do with the relationship of the plaza to the Agriculture Building and the south access to the Ferry Terminal. This has been addressed in the plans which are currently being developed, which reconfigures the geometry of the plaza to be orthogonal on the south and east sides to create a more positive relationship to the Agriculture Building.



LOCAL VICINITY MAP

SOUTH BASIN FERRY TERMINAL DESIGN PROJECT

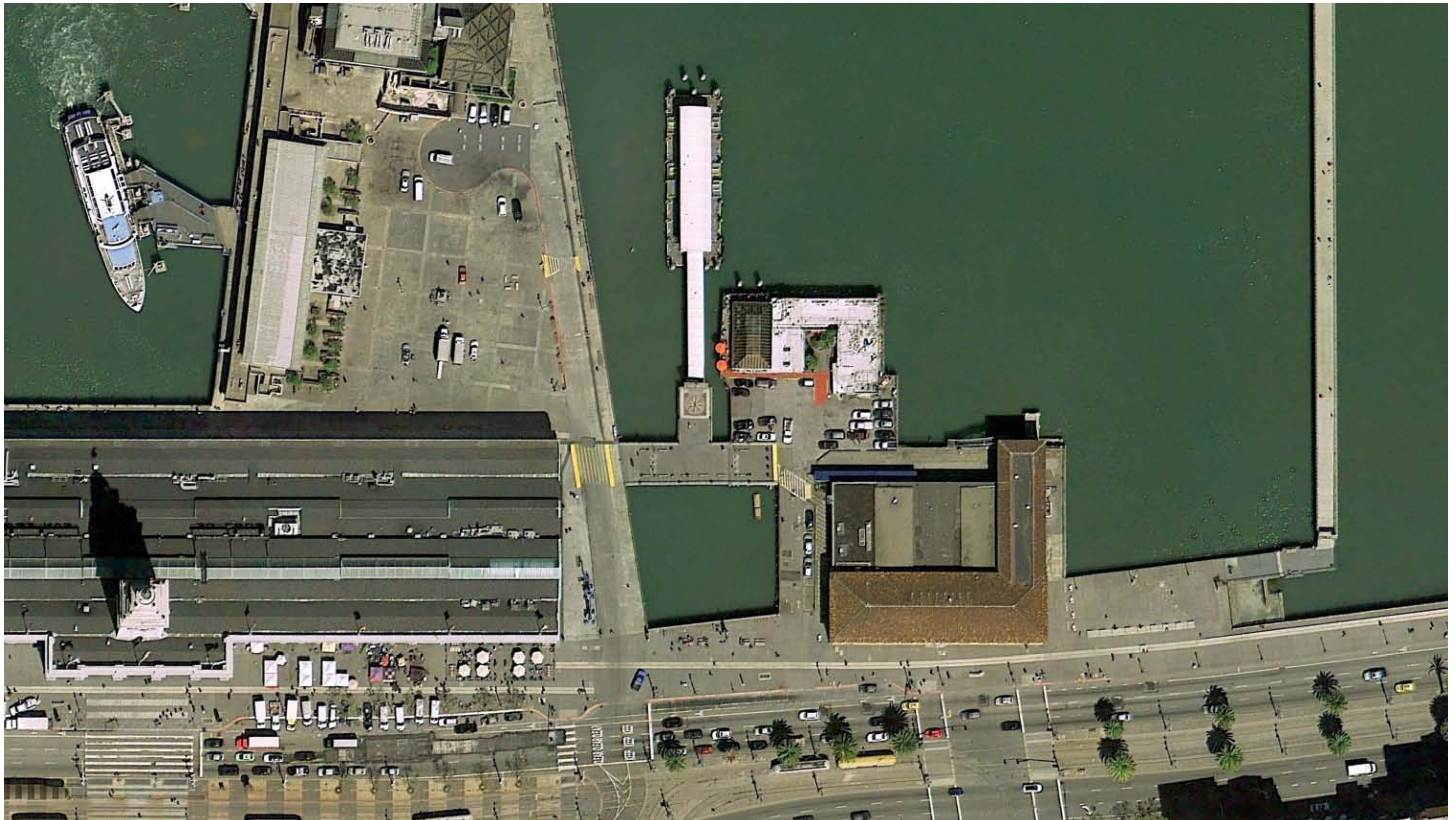
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DOWNTOWN FERRY TERMINAL EXPANSION MASTER PLAN

SOUTH BASIN FERRY TERMINAL DESIGN PROJECT

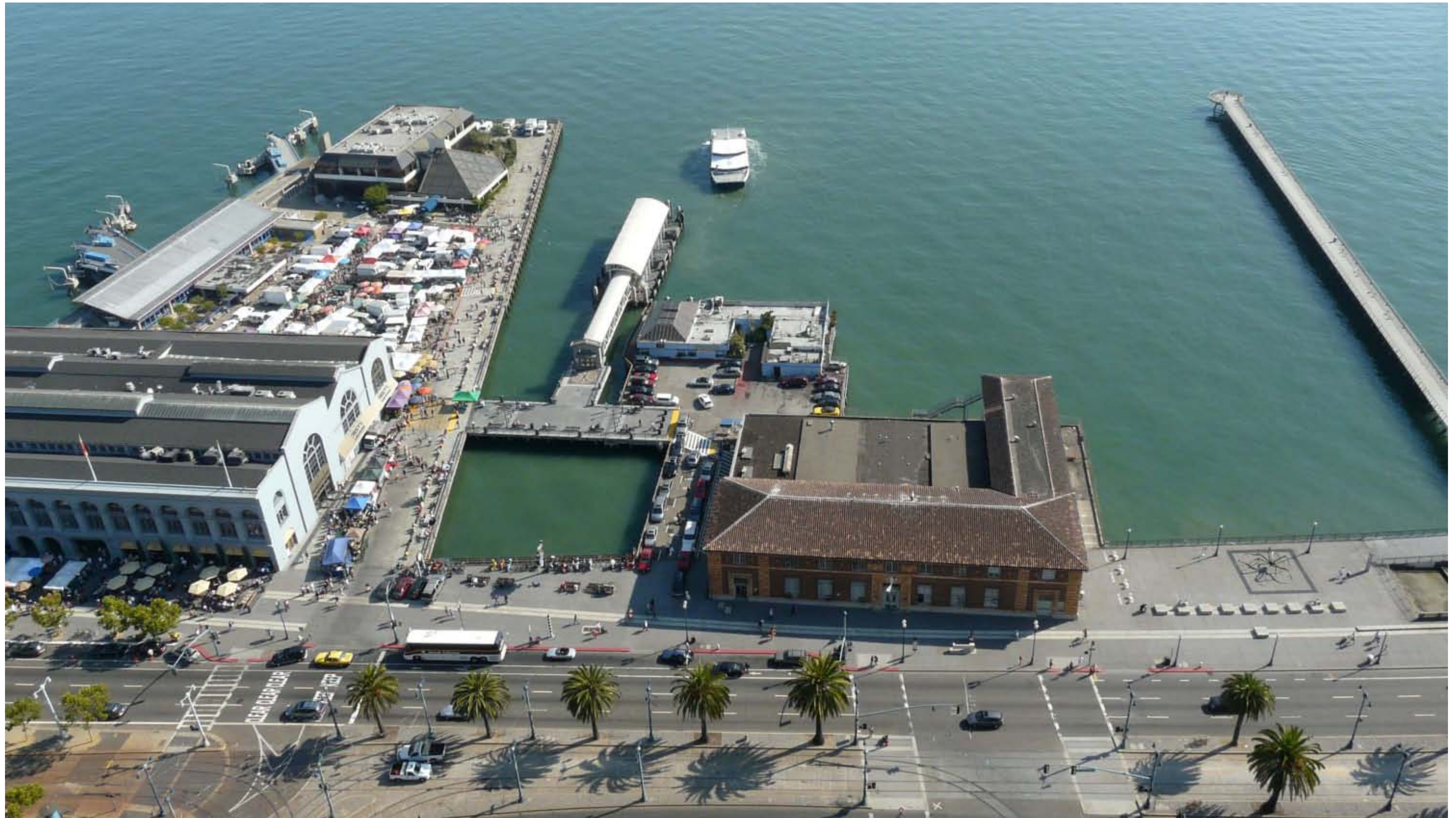
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EXISTING CONDITIONS

SOUTH BASIN FERRY TERMINAL DESIGN PROJECT

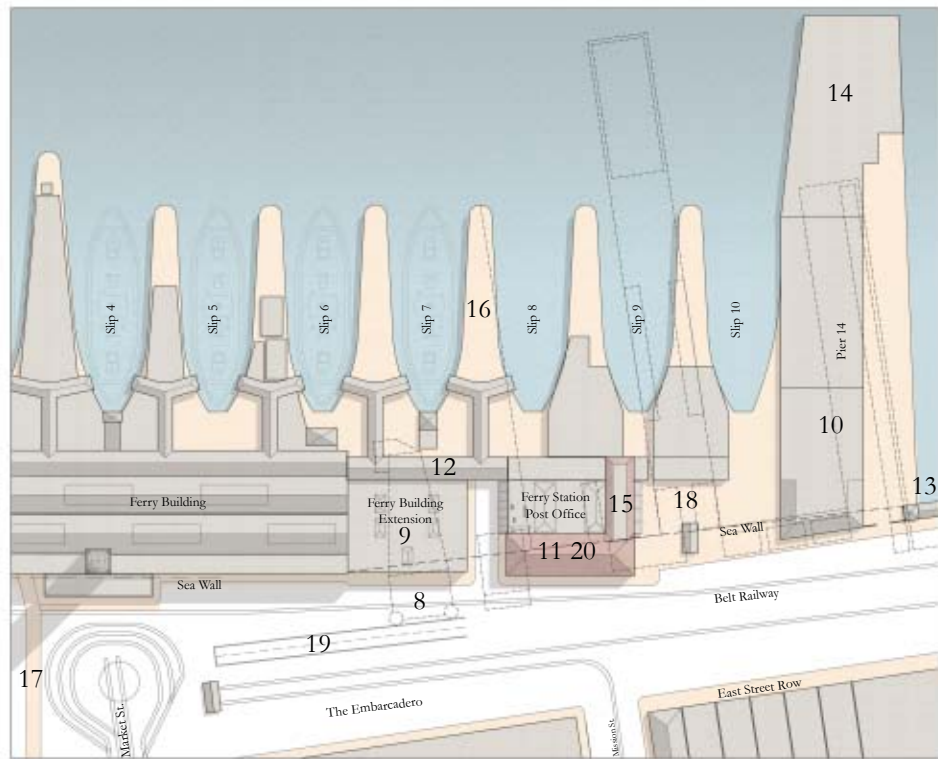
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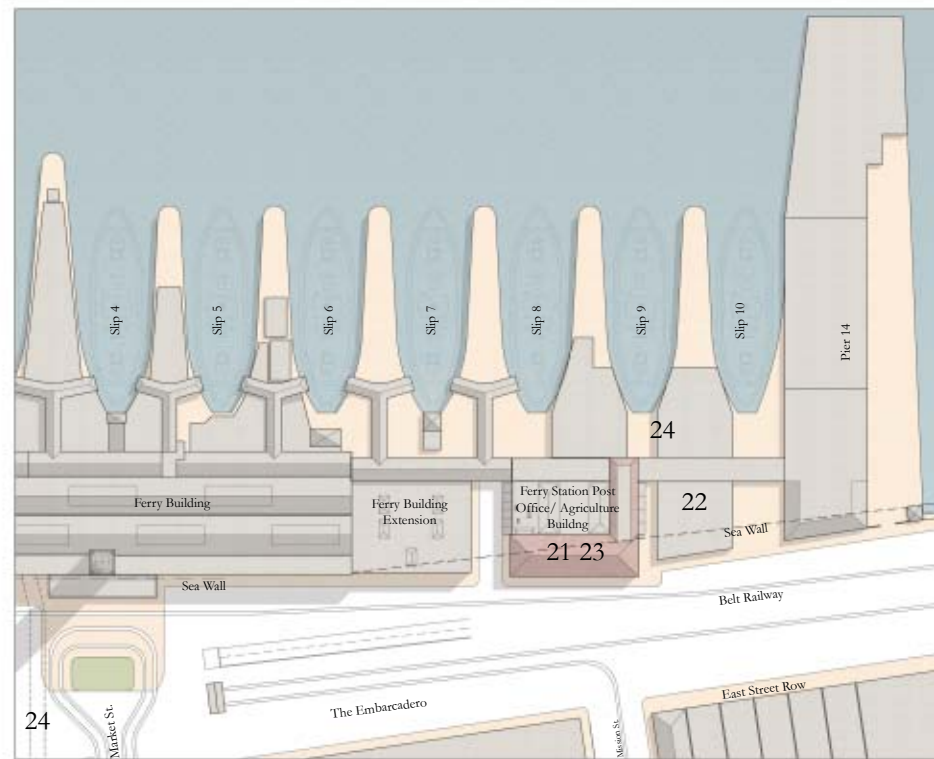
EXISTING CONDITIONS

SOUTH BASIN FERRY TERMINAL DESIGN PROJECT

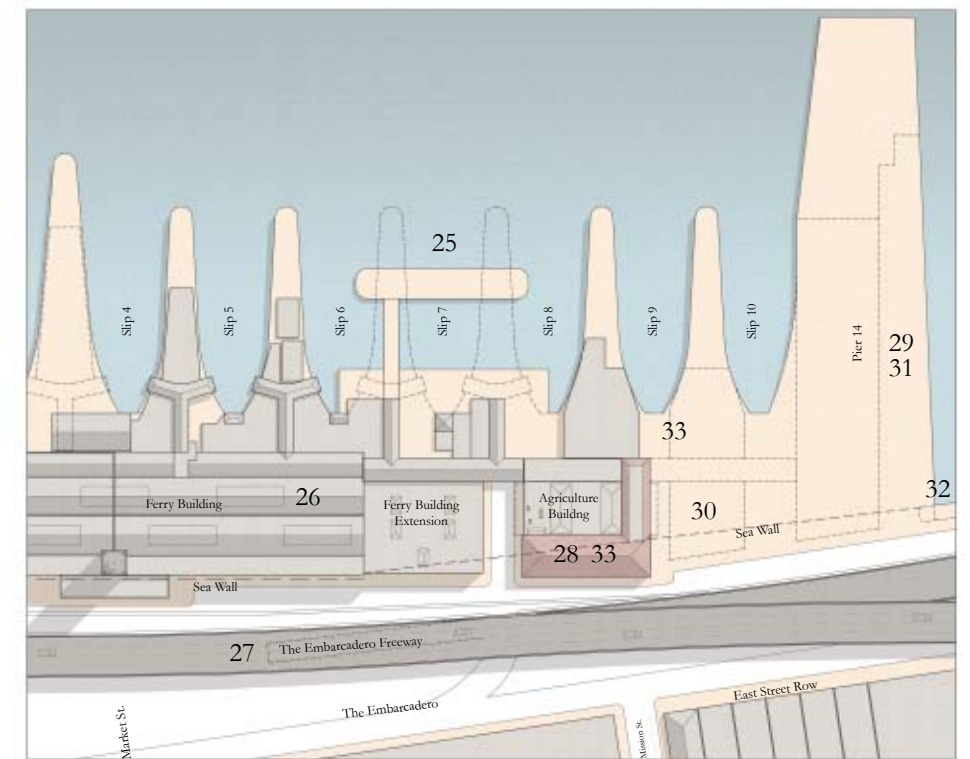
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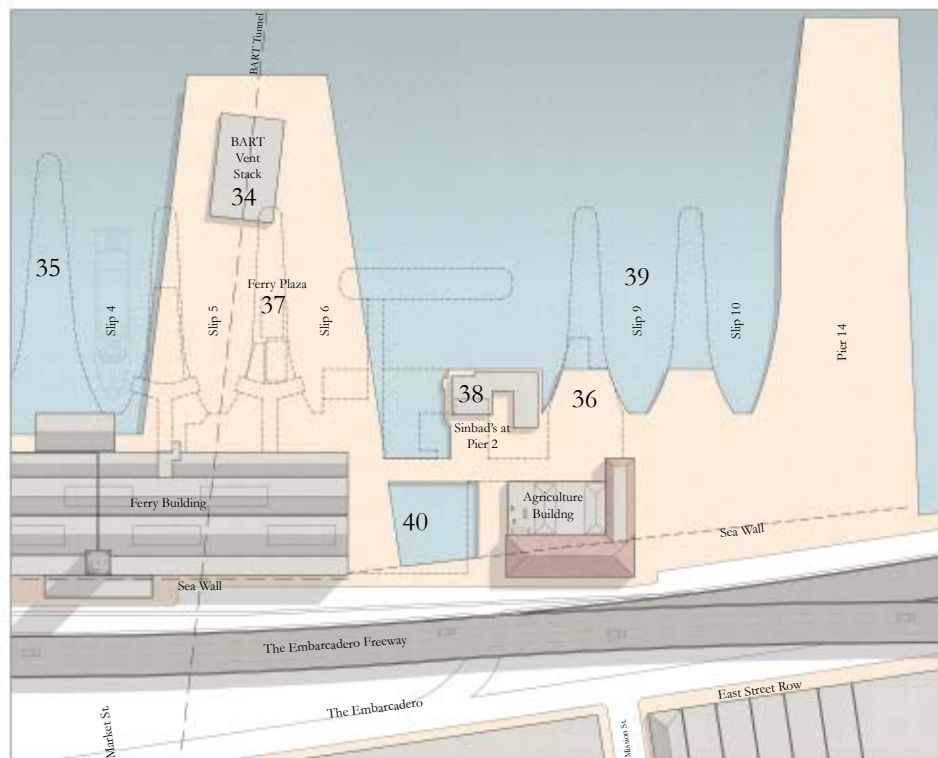
1915 - 1925



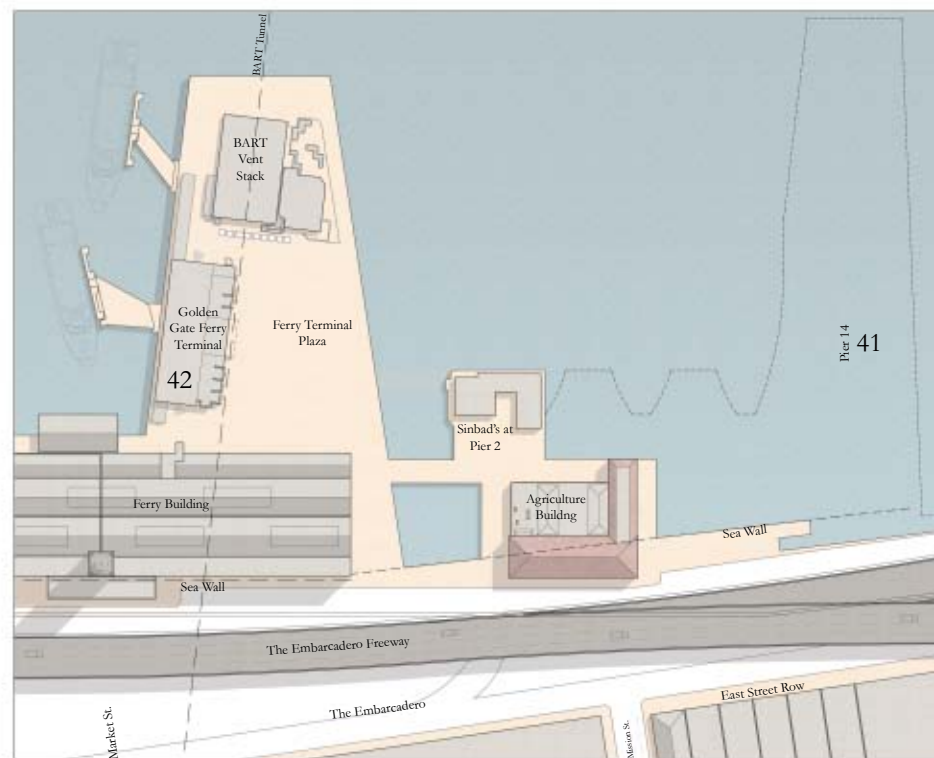
1926 - 1945



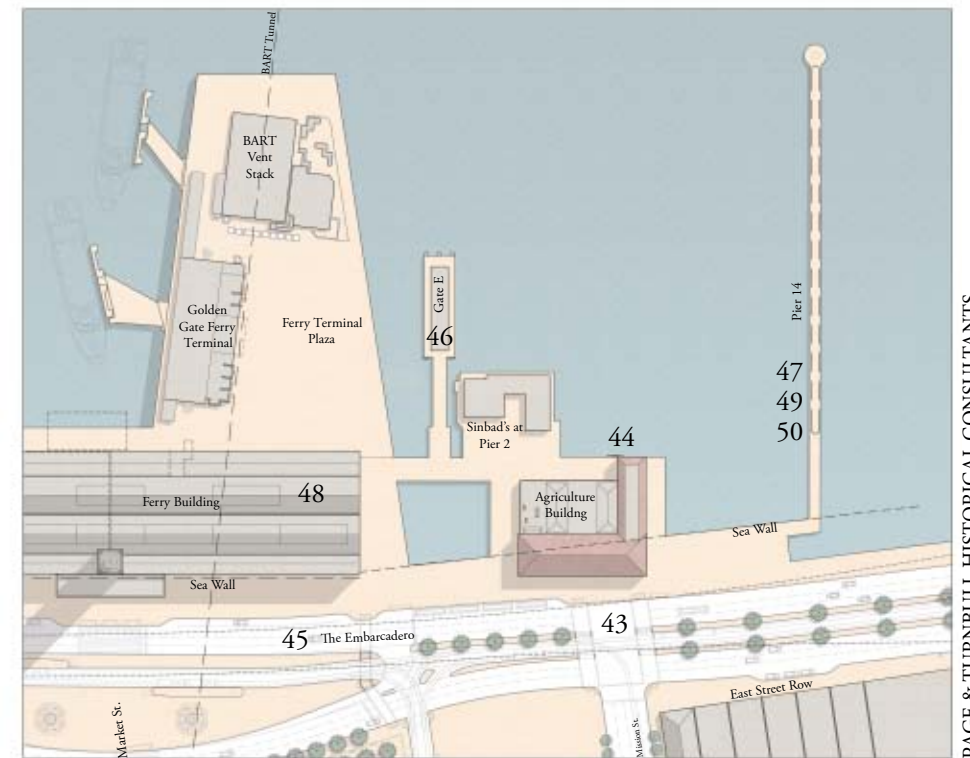
1946 - 1965



1966 - 1975



1976 - 1985

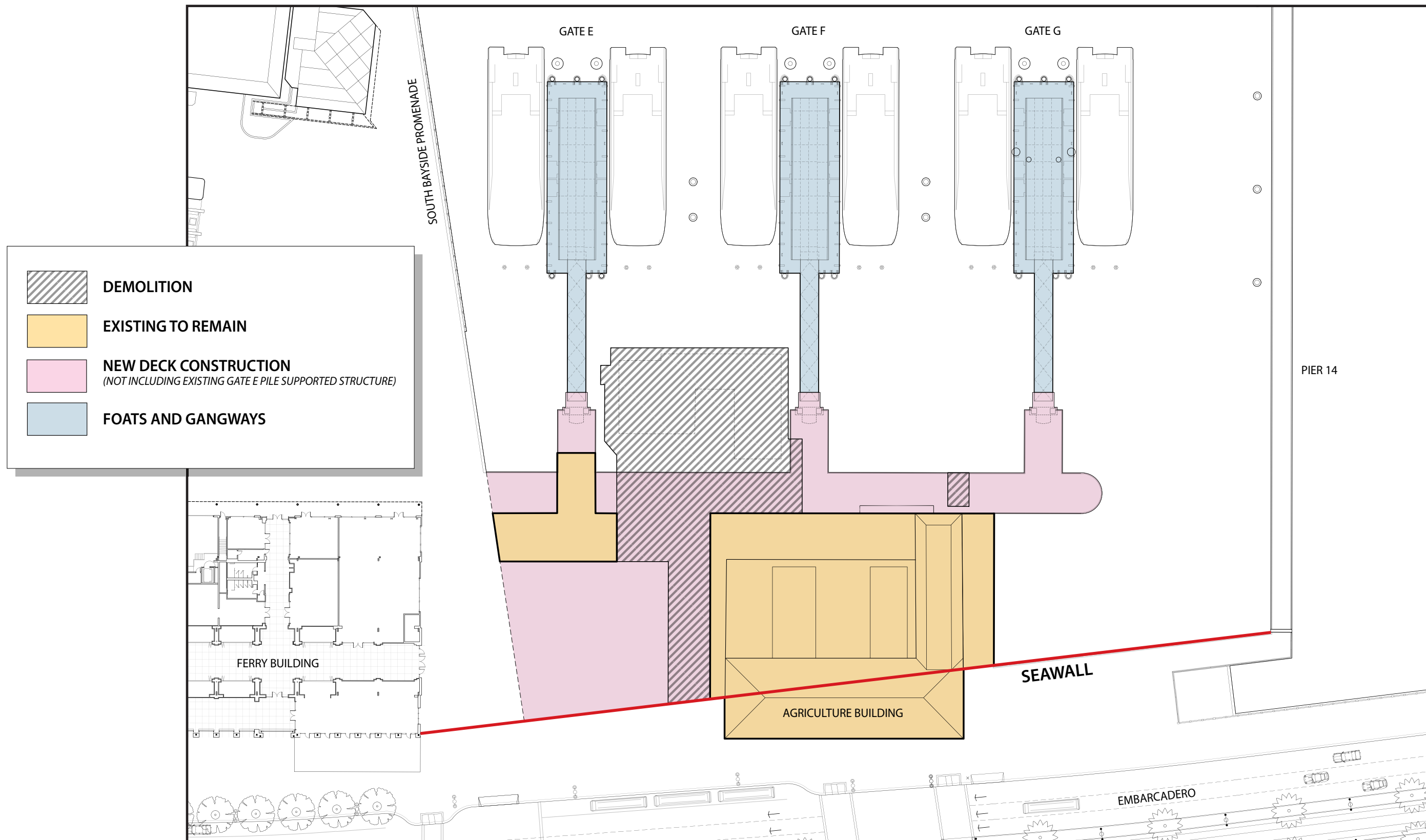


1986 - 2010

SOUTH BASIN SUMMARY OF PHYSICAL CHANGES, 1915 TO 2010

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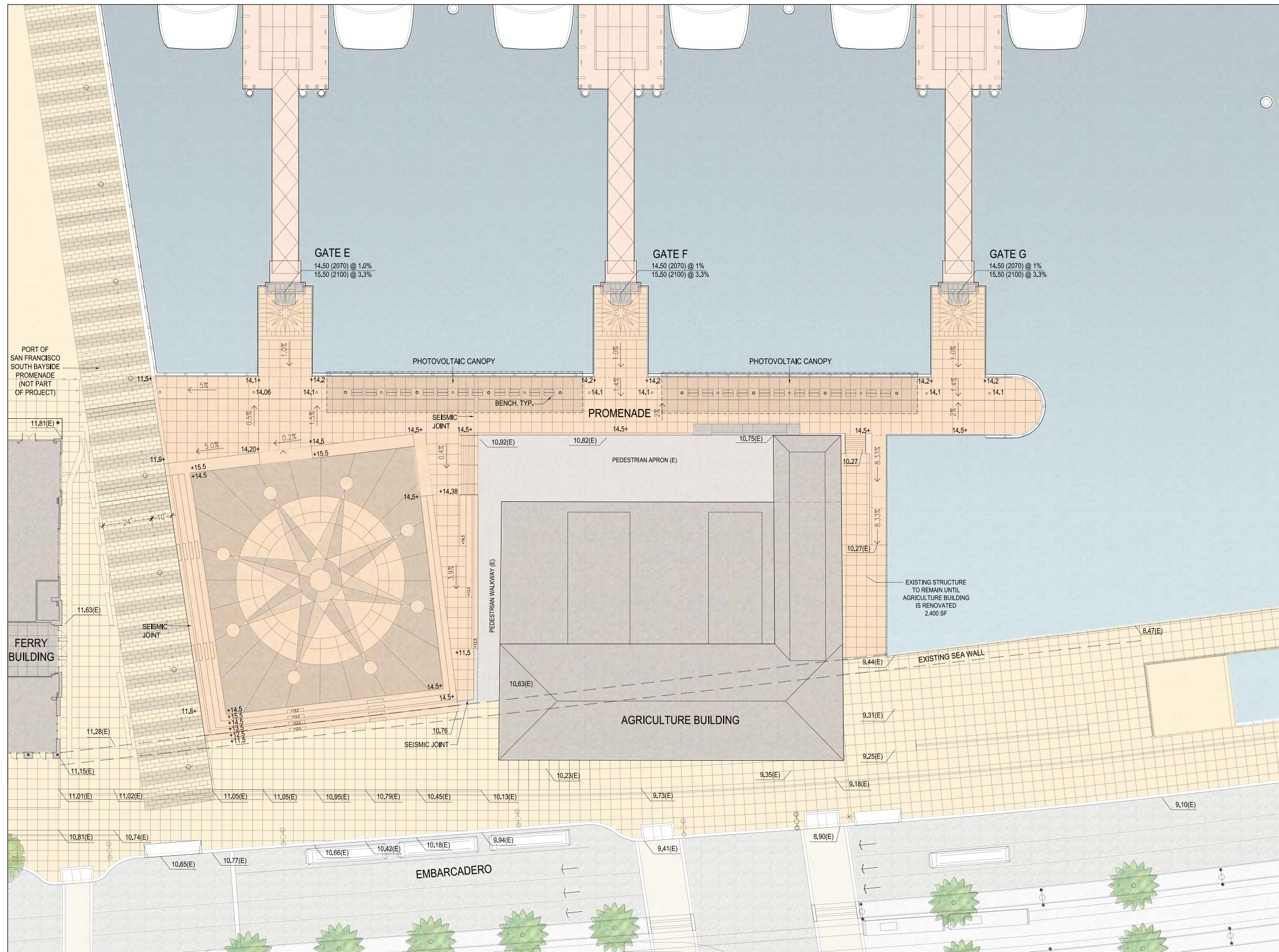


DEMOLITION AND CONSTRUCTION AREAS

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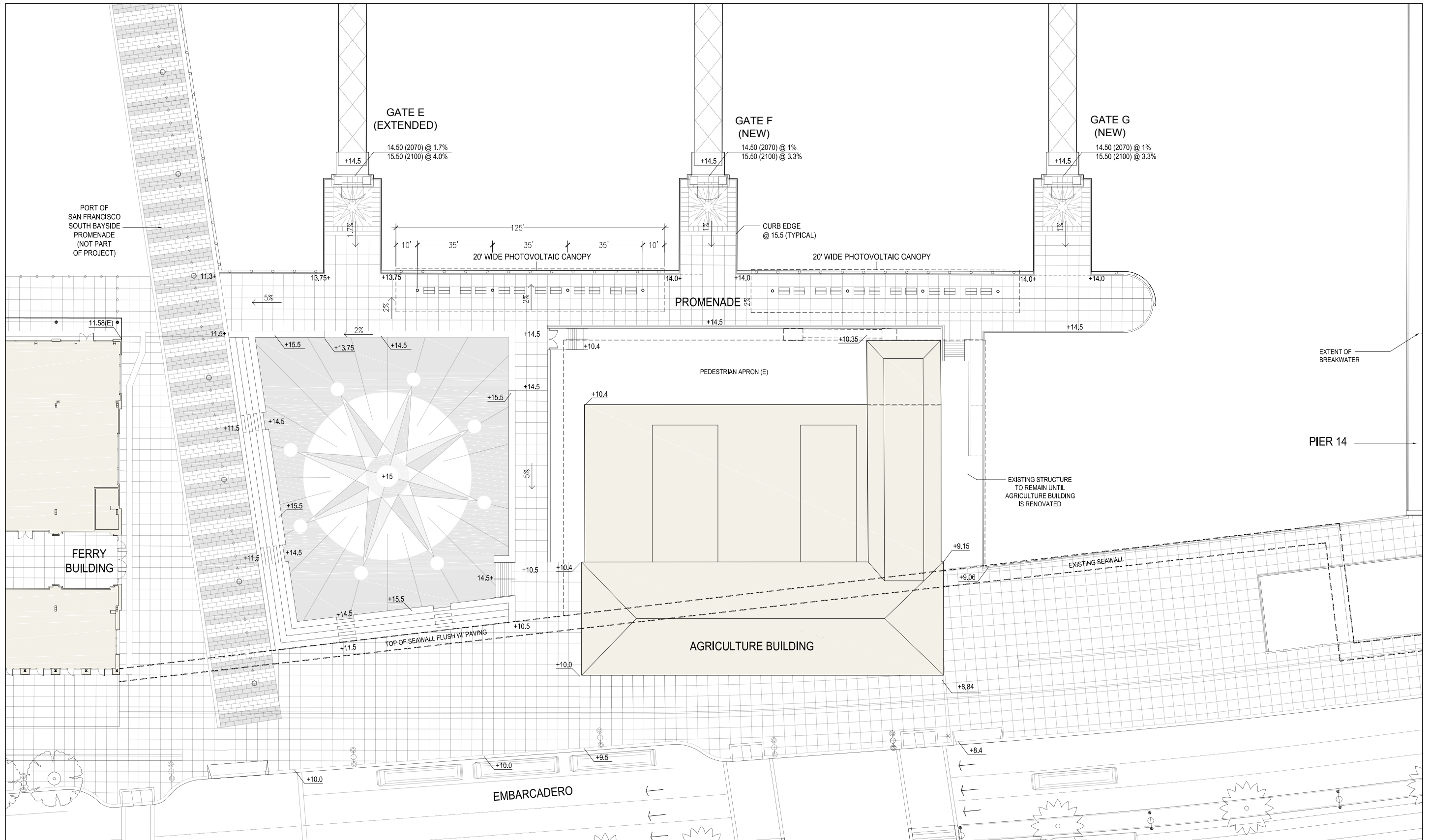




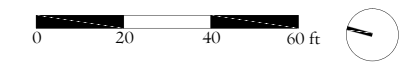
PRELIMINARY LAYOUT AND GRADING PLAN

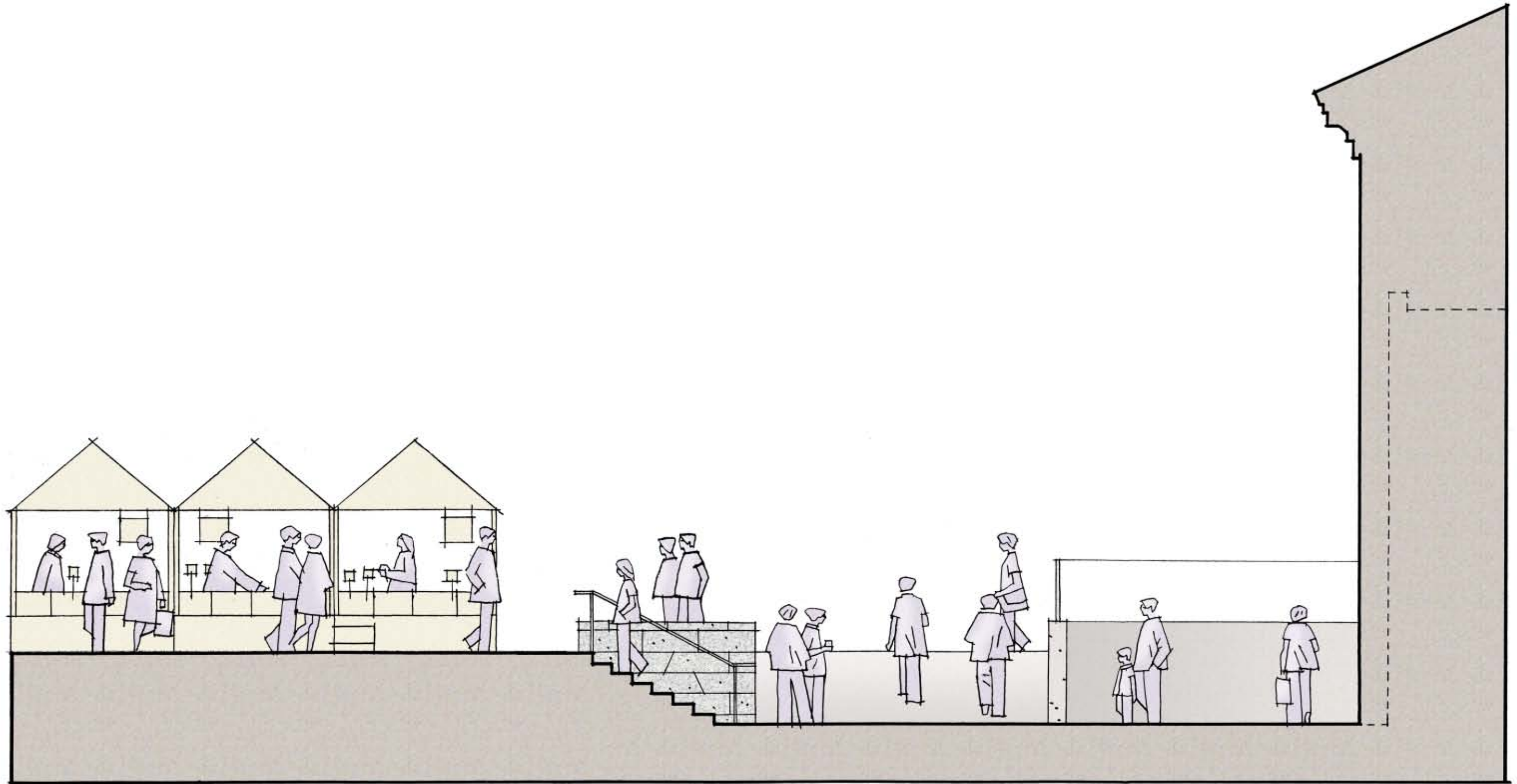
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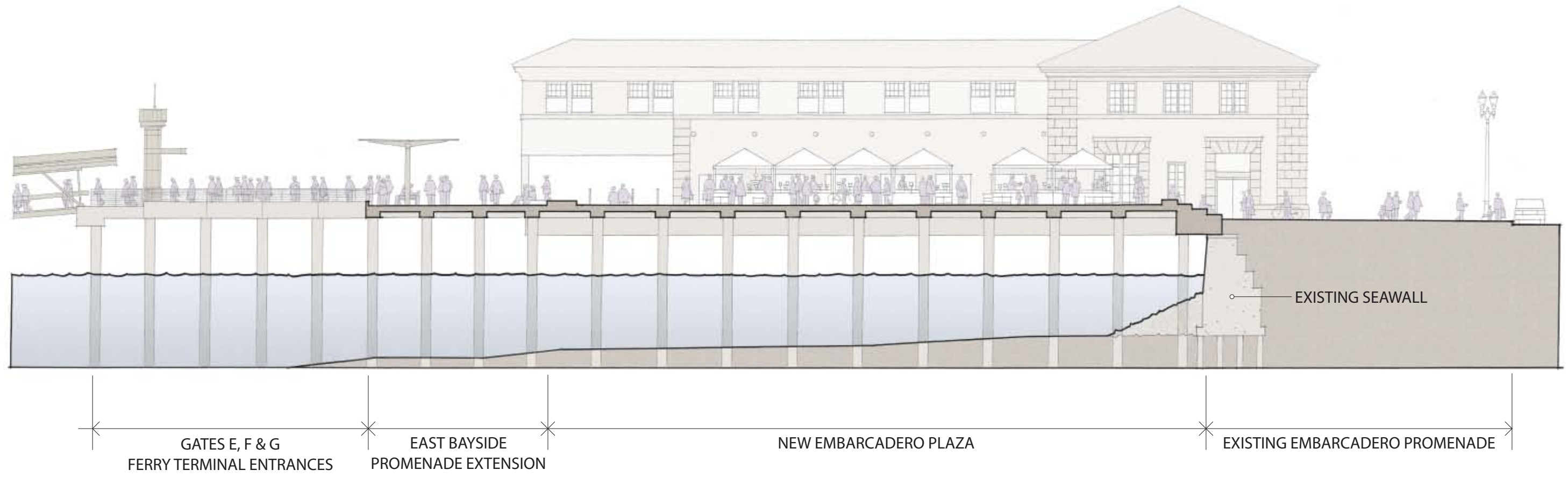


IN PROGRESS REVISED PLAN RESPONDING TO BCDC DRB AND PORT WDAC COMMENTS





BASED ON REVISED PLAN, MODIFIED CROSS-SECTION OF SOUTH ACCESS AND RELATIONSHIP TO AGRICULTURE BUILDING

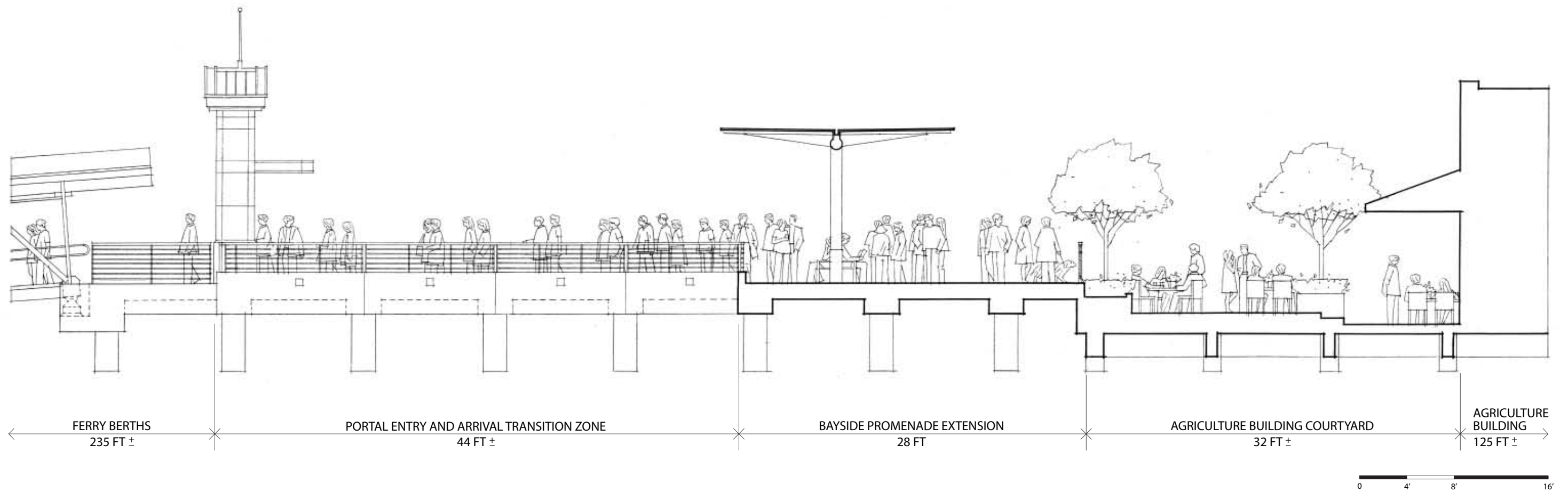


CROSS-SECTION FROM THE BAY TO THE EMBARCADERO

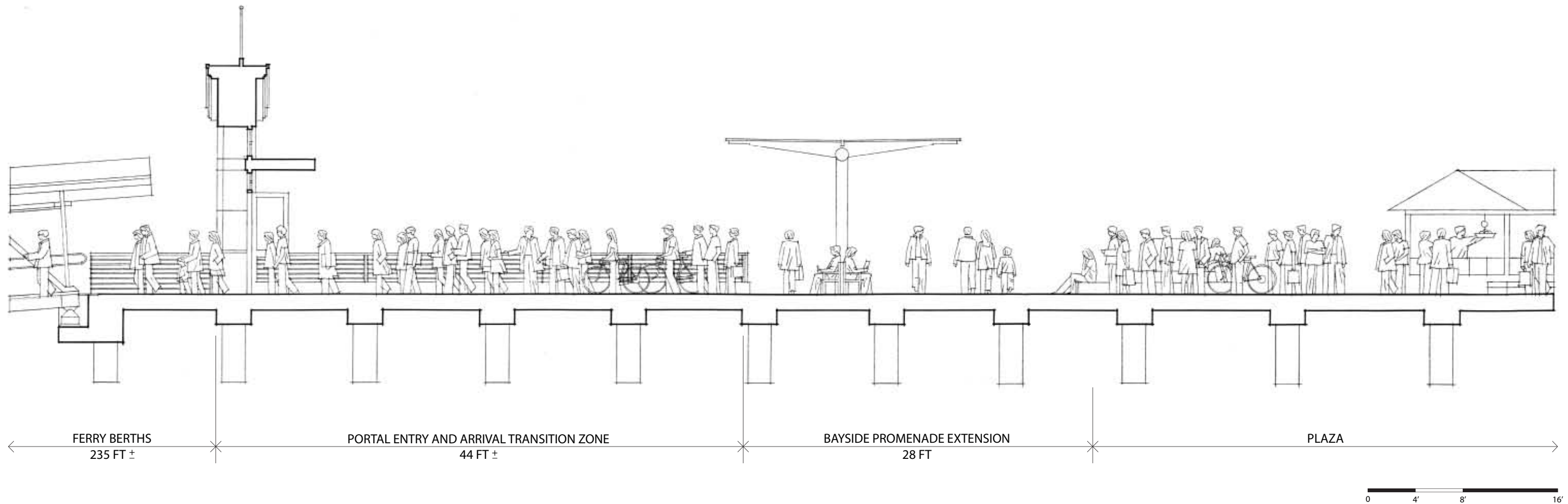


CROSS-SECTION OF PLAZA AT EMBARCADERO EDGE FACING SOUTH TO THE AGRICULTURE BUILDING

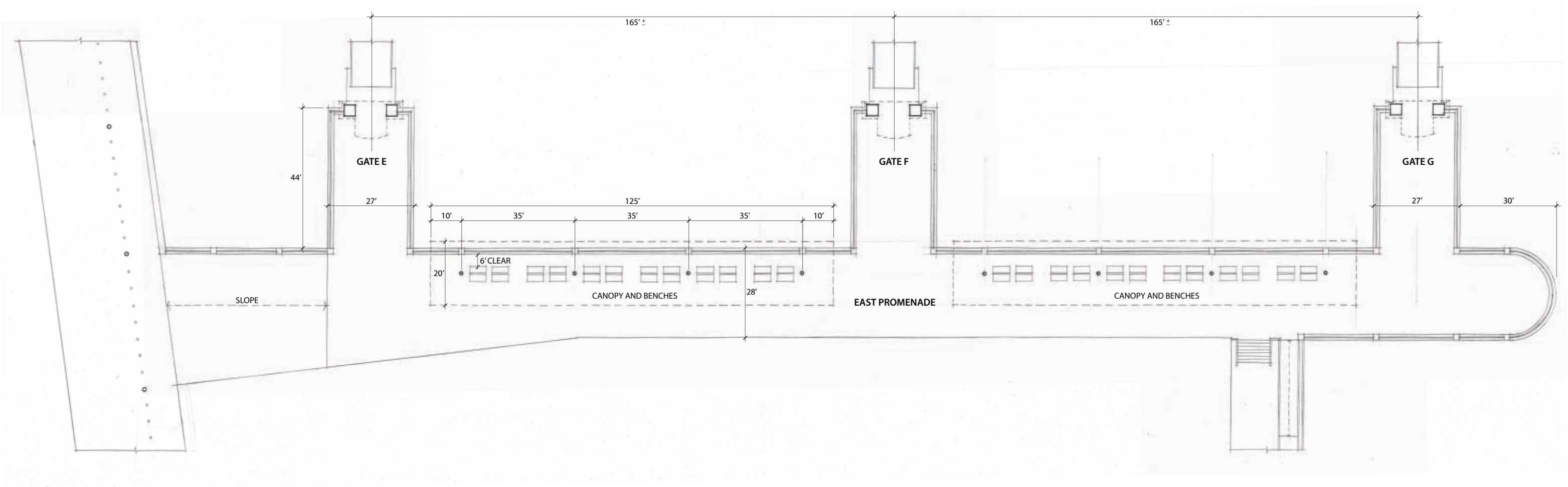
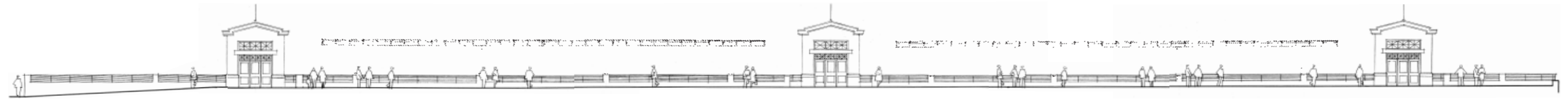




CROSS-SECTION GATE F APPROACH PROMENADE AND AGRICULTURE BUILDING EDGE



CROSS-SECTION THROUGH GATE E PORTAL APPROACH, PROMENADE AND EDGE OF PLAZA



PROMENADE PLAN AND ELEVATION OF GATES E, F & G

SOUTH BASIN FERRY TERMINAL DESIGN PROJECT

SPRING / FALL



SUMMER



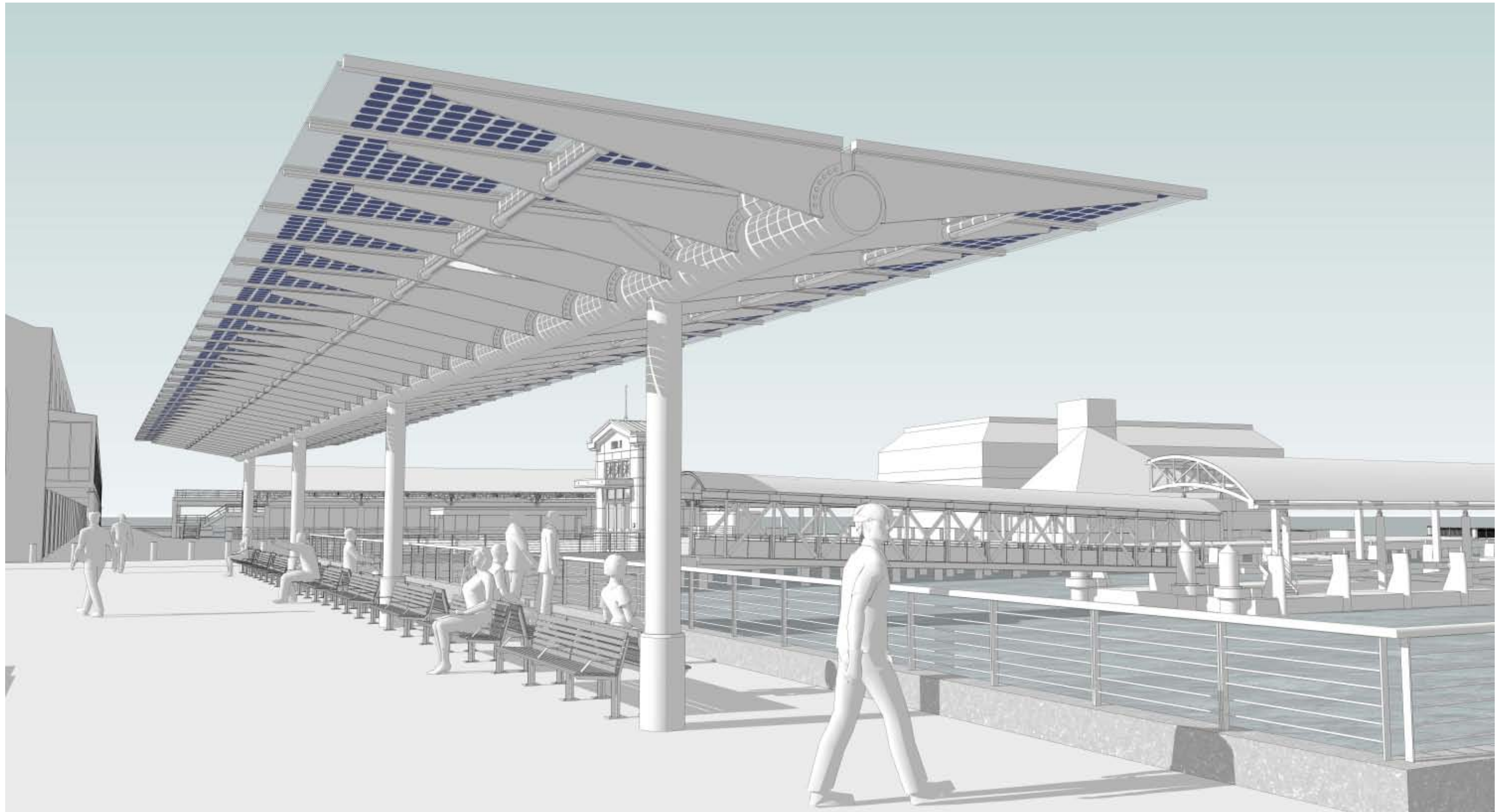
WINTER



CANOPY DESIGN AND SHADOW STUDIES

SOUTH BASIN FERRY TERMINAL DESIGN PROJECT

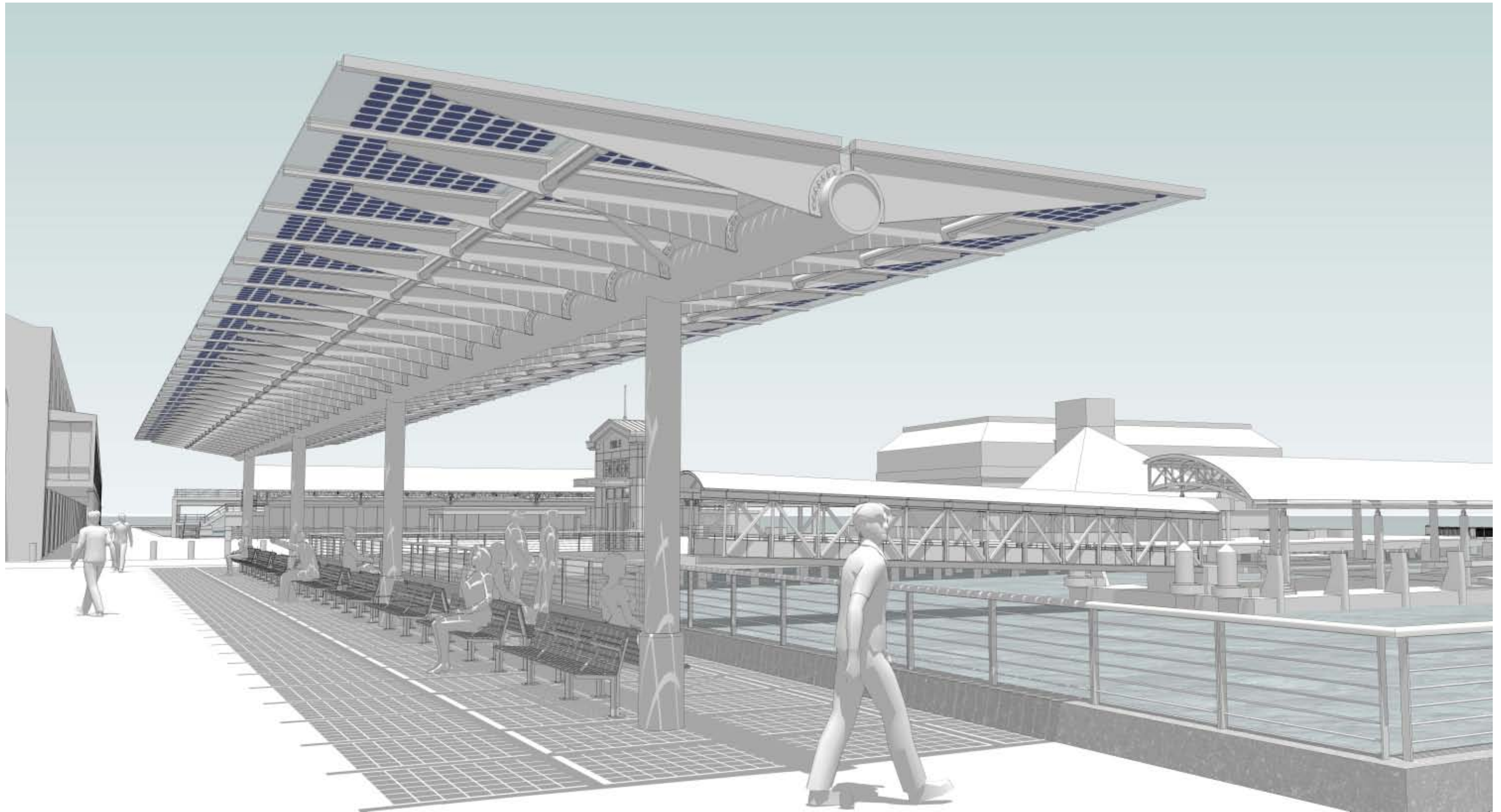
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CANOPY GENERALIZED SHADOW STUDY: SPRING / FALL DURING PEAK PM BOARDING (APPROXIMATELY 4:00 PM)

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CANOPY GENERALIZED SHADOW STUDY: PEAK SUMMER MID-DAY PUBLIC VISITATION

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UNION CITY BART STATION



ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

PHOTOVOLTAIC CANOPY EXAMPLES

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