

PROJECT DESCRIPTION ■

2020 Bay Road, East Palo Alto, CA

07.24.2020

Site:

The project site is a 17.2-acre parcel located at the end of Bay Road near Cooley Landing overlooking the San Francisco Bay. The project site is bounded by Bay Road and Tara Road with open space to the north and San Francisco Bay to the east. Surrounding uses are primarily light industrial, residential neighborhood and a PG&E substation across Bay Road. BCDC's 100' shoreline band is part of the site and totals approximately 1.89 acres. The BCDC portion is proposed as a waterfront park with a trail and amenities. A PG&E easement that runs through the site will remain.

The overall proposed project is composed of five 8-story office buildings (which include -civic use, retail and business support services), mechanical automated parking towers, surface parking, landscape amenities, plazas and open spaces. The overall project size is 1,343,292 SF which aligns with the maximum office square footage studied in the Ravens wood/4 Corners Specific Plan. In addition the parking ratio was adjusted to accommodate the City minimum requirement of 1/300 SF for a total of 4,478 parking spaces. Overall density for the project is 1.78 FAR.

All previously proposed subterranean parking has been eliminated to reduce the amount of off-haul and reduce the construction impacts on the surrounding community. The parking structure has been replaced with automated parking towers. This all electric system streamlines the parking process, eliminates queuing and reduces CO2 emissions as cars no longer drive laps around a traditional parking structure.

The office buildings range in size from 230,000 SF to 323,000 SF with floor plates in the range of 29,000 SF to 42,000 SF. This building size has proven to be highly desirable amongst the type of companies that will be attracted to this project.

The project will include preferred parking for vanpools, carpools and electric vehicles as required by LEED and CalGreen. Bicycle parking for each building is provided within the building footprint as well as next to the building entries. and Clean Air/Vanpool/ EV parking areas are distributed on the surface parking lots and in the parking towers (narrative from Watry Design on how the parking towers function is provided in a separate attachment)

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Options:

As part of the submittal we have provided a Base site plan as well as an alternate site plan. Both options include a 14,000 sf Business support space including plaza for public use and approximately 53,000 sf for Civic use. Additionally, we have also provided in the graphics package options for Façade Design.

Updated Site Plan:

The goal of the revised site plan is to connect the Waterfront Park to Bay Road in a more meaningful way. The plan eliminates the eastern most entry drive from Bay road and converts the space to a public promenade approximately 68' wide.

Alternate Site Plan:

Rotated buildings create a more pedestrian friendly street frontage reducing the amount of building facade fronting Bay Road. The new 80' wide central plaza, activated by ground floor retail, creates an inviting public space providing a connection from Bay Road to the Waterfront Park

Base Façade Design:

The “big idea” behind the architectural façade design is to represent the buildings as metaphors for sculpted art; and showcase the campus as a collection of art forms that create a certain iconography when seen from a distant.

The building mass is simple and yet expressive due to the subtle juxtaposition of planes and forms.

The façade character is modern in style which focuses on broad brush approach to architectural articulation and features, rather than the extensive promotion of details. The aesthetics though simple has a playful character by the random shapes and pattern of its fenestrations, outdoor balconies and other architectural elements. There is also a hint of a nautical aesthetics due to its waterfront setting – via the cladding expression of metal/ “Trespa” panel that looked like vertical shiplap siding.



The base of the building is very glassy to maximize visual connectivity between the exterior and interior spaces. The glassy expression on the street level also emphasize a lighter, more exciting experience to pedestrians. The building overall has more glass than solid walls to maximize natural daylighting and views to the outdoors.

The proposed materials are high quality and durable. All glass materials for both vision and spandrel have bird safe frits.

The parking towers design will take some cue from the office building aesthetics but will also have some design elements that shows its mechanical nature.

Alternate Façade Design:

This alternate architectural design approach is a composition of an elegance and simplicity in massing, fenestrations and textural skin features with an industrial feel; the intention of which is to evoke a sense of aesthetic familiarity, that seeks to blend well with the city’s existing and future vernacular.

Consideration to people experience and sensitivity to human scale are the primary drivers to the building design aesthetics. The eight-story office façades are designed to look like four levels of varying aesthetic expression that appears gradating from a heavier base to a light looking top. The building base which has the most street presence and pedestrian experience is designed to have bigger fenestrations with articulated pilasters. The larger transparencies create more visual connectivity between the exterior and interior environments. It brings forth a friendly, welcoming and animated façade. The brick cladding adds a quality of richness and scale. The upper floors become less fenestrated and transitions to a glassier building top that blends well with the sky, looks light and creates an unimposing skyline. Large expanses of glassy bay windows and outdoor terraces serve as accent elements in the overall building form.

The buildings’ architectural style is a contemporary interpretation of industrial architecture that employs simplicity of form and architectural lines. It has a character of permanence and grounded appeal.

Its earthy building colors and materials such as brick, metals or concrete panels, glass and wood accents have a tone and character that works well with the surrounding environment and waterfront setting. They are also durable and sustainable.



The parking tower design takes its design cues from the office building reusing and reinterpreting its materials and colors.

Landscape Design:

The landscape program centers along the Waterfront Park and its public access from Bay Road, drawing the public to this edge with a soft meandering experience. The Business Support Services activates the Plaza along Bay Road and creates a counter point to the soft pastoral Waterfront Park. The interior of the campus ties the two together with a shared experience of both urbanity and California Native Landscape with the use of activated plazas at building entries and areas for respite, seating and informal gathering spaces as the user travels from building to building, or open space to open space under the Canopy of Coast Live Oaks, Fruitless Olives, Redbuds and other site and microclimate appropriate Trees for this part of East Palo Alto.

Materials are both pastoral and urban in nature, evoking the softness in geometry of the SF Bay's shoreline but using durable high quality materials appropriate for an urban setting such as pavers, decomposed granite, and concrete paving with specialty finishes. The plant palette starts with the use of California Natives at the Bay's edge and slowly moves to more structured use of Mediterranean adapted species in the campus interior and along the Bay Road frontage. The changes in material and geometry are subtle enough to maintain a cohesive campus experience but strong enough to create a distinct sense of place depending on where you are on campus.

Waterfront Park:

The Waterfront Park is the primary draw to the site, with waterfront views, opportunities for education on local history and ecology, and active and passive zones for all who call East Palo Alto home. The public access from Bay Road is an open, inviting 40'+ wide swath of green calling your attention with the use of architecturally interesting California Natives and colorful adaptive species. Interwoven paving material creates the public access to the park with curves which integrate seamlessly into the adjacent planting, the experience being a blurred line between paving and planting under the canopy of Palo Verde and Native Redbud Trees. The user is greeted by the Canopy of Coast Live Oaks once within the Waterfront Park, and the opportunities start unfolding. Picnic areas of durable materials dot the park, linked by a Decomposed Granite (DG) multi modal pathway for pedestrians and bicycles. Educational opportunities for learning about the rich local history and ecology of East Palo Alto, find



themselves both along the DG pathway in informal areas, but also in larger seating areas where a user can also have a nice picnic. These educational opportunities find themselves in the form of interpretive signage and big binoculars for bird watching, star gazing or even ship watching. Children can play at the flexible open turf area, graded in such a way this can be used for both educational events like an amphitheater or for smaller games of soccer. The idea being that everyone can find themselves in the Waterfront Park.