

**CITY OF OAKLAND**  
**AGENDA REPORT**

FILED  
CITY CLERK  
2006 APR 27 PM 1:11

TO: Office of the City Administrator  
ATTN: Deborah Edgerly  
FROM: Measure DD Program Manager  
DATE: May 2, 2006

RE: Supplemental Report On The Measure DD Lake Merritt Projects And  
Recommendations On Potential Alternatives For Action

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**SUMMARY**

At the April 11, 2006 Life Enrichment Committee meeting, staff presented a report that discussed tree removal, traffic impacts, the exterior restroom at the Municipal Boathouse, the parking lot at the Municipal Boathouse, and roadway changes at El Embarcadero. Staff was asked to prepare a supplemental report that would recap the comments made by members of the Life Enrichment Committee, review the alternate parking lot proposal submitted by the Lakeside Drive neighbors, discuss funding of Measure DD projects, and present staff recommendations for review and action by the City Council.

**KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS**

Summary of Comments by the Life Enrichment Committee

Councilmember Kernighan:

- Tree removals are going through a separate review and permit process. Significant reduction in the number of tree removals originally proposed has resulted in a good plan.
- El Embarcadero – Library has always been surrounded by roads, so not convinced that road changes would have that dramatic of an impact. Plan creates a larger green space next to the Lake.
- Lakeshore roadway changes – Plan to narrow roadway to add bike lanes and parkland will make it more like a scenic drive and less like a commuter throughway.
- Restroom - Staff's recommendation to move restroom acceptable; restroom should not be left at its existing location.
- Parking lot – Supports idea of moving two existing parking lots away from water's edge. Trade off of one public good for another. Supports adding more trees to help screen lot from the neighbors' view.

Councilmember Quan:

- Measure DD has gone through a fairly good process – has never seen another tax initiative where staff has met with public monthly.
- Pretty much okay with the revised tree removal plans.

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- Maintenance of parks is important.
- Supports moving parking lots away from the Boathouse, particularly the south parking lot which intrudes into the view from Camron-Stanford House.
- Would like to look at installing a smaller new north lot combined with the frontage road idea, and a lot more trees added.
- El Embarcadero and Lakeshore – Supports removing one road and traffic calming. Would like to know if the two-foot widening of El Embarcadero could be done on the side of the street away from the Library? (*Staff note: moving the curb on the other side of the street will cause the removal of a row of mature London Plane trees.*)

Councilmember Brooks:

- Feels that Lake is beautiful in and of itself. Concerned that in an attempt to improve the Lake we are making things worse.
- Putting a parking lot in the meadow is not good. The residents' plan is aesthetically superior.
- Questioned whether the area behind the existing bathroom may feel unsafe because the Boathouse is not currently occupied. (*Staff note: the unsafe feeling was also present when the Boathouse was occupied by the Office of Parks and Recreation.*)
- Concerned that proposed bathroom does not look like the other structures, and feels that it is an eyesore. (*Staff note: per the direction of the Landmarks Board and historic design standards, non-historic buildings should not mimic historic building designs.*)
- Staff should pay attention to details.
- Concerned that public money is going to a San Francisco restaurant entity, rather than an Oakland-based business.
- Does not want a hard concrete path surface.
- Would like the Lake to have a beautiful manicured look, with improved maintenance.

Councilmember Chang:

- Feels that the residents' proposed 27-car parking lot encroaches on the path and Lake.
- Feels that Measure DD should create a green, wide path around the Lake.
- Wants restroom away from the Boathouse, to remove the unsafe area and so people can appreciate the beauty of the historic building.
- Would like to have staff present a review of the residents' frontage road idea so that Councilmembers can make a good decision.

Review of Lakeside Neighbors' Parking Lot Proposal

The Lakeside Drive neighbors presented a proposal for the restroom and parking lot at Life Enrichment Committee, and it is attached as Exhibit J-1. They also presented a modified

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proposal at the April 17 Measure DD Community Coalition meeting, a copy of which is attached as Exhibits J-2 and J-3.

The neighbors' plan emphasizes preservation of the turf area north of the Boathouse. All parking north of the Boathouse is eliminated. Parking is added along a new median island in Lakeside Drive, and the existing parking lot south of the Boathouse is enlarged.

Neighbors' Plan Pros:

- Green space in the north lawn area is preserved.
- Two trees on north side are preserved and one more tree on the south side must be removed, for a net gain of one tree.
- Reducing Lakeside Drive to two lanes during non-peak hours should help calm traffic.

Neighbors' Plan Cons:

- The addition of a median island and a bike lane requires moving the curb and sidewalk ten to twelve feet into the park. This change significantly reduces green area and steepens the slope towards the building.
- Widening the street will require new curb, gutter and sidewalk, relocation of streetlights and conduits, reconstruction of street grades to ensure drainage, and relocation of storm drain inlets. Steeper slopes may require retaining walls. This work is very expensive. Even considering the savings from replacing the proposed north parking lot with turf, the net extra expense is estimated to be approximately \$150,000.
- The proposed south parking lot is very close to the Boathouse and does not provide an appropriate landscaped setting for the historic building.
- The proposed south parking lot is very close to the multi-use path, squeezing the path into sharper turns and visually intruding into the experience of the path users.
- The proposed south parking lot is in the view of the neighbors at 1515 Lakeside, and reduces the green lawn area on this side of the Boathouse.
- The proposed south parking lot is a dead-end design, and does not provide convenient circulation like the proposed north parking lot would.
- The bio-swale at the north lawn is eliminated, causing street storm drain water to continue flowing untreated into the Lake.
- The proposed reinforced grass paving at the new south parking lot does not have a good track record for lots that receive normal to heavy use. The City's design using concrete turf cells filled with permeable decomposed granite would be more appropriate.
- The delivery entrance and kitchen, located on the north side of the building, is not well-served by the south parking lot.
- There is no provision for covered storage or pickup of the garbage and recycling bins.
- Restroom is proposed to remain in its existing location, detracting from the historic building, providing a hidden area for unsavory activity, and creating an awkward and unpleasant approach to the proposed café entrance.

Staff believes that the advantages of the neighbors' design are outweighed by the disadvantages.

### Discussion of Funding

At the April 13, 2006 Rules Committee meeting, a citizen noted that the original appropriation for the Municipal Boathouse project was \$6.5 million and that the current cost estimate is \$12.5 million. He noted that many Measure DD projects are underfunded. Councilmember Brunner asked that this issue be discussed in this supplemental report.

First, the current \$12.5 million estimate for the Municipal Boathouse/Lakeside Drive project also includes renovation of pathways, seawalls, and four acres of parkland. These items are budgeted under and funded by separate Measure DD projects.

Second, all Measure DD projects are indeed underfunded. The total bond amount is \$198.25 million. In the June 2003 report to City Council that initiated implementation of Measure DD, staff noted that the total cost to fully implement all projects described under the Measure was approximately \$362 million. Due to recent construction cost inflation, this funding gap has increased significantly.

This underfunding of projects was deliberate. Measure DD was passed with the intention of using these funds as local matching funds to leverage outside funding. Staff has pursued outside funding for Measure DD projects, with some notable successes. However, not every project has received outside funds. For such projects that remain underfunded, there are two choices. The scope of work can be reduced or additional funds can be reallocated from another Measure DD project. Typically, a reasonably good cost estimate can be obtained at the 35% design stage. If the estimated cost exceeds the budget, the project is scaled back or at least designed in phases so that later phases can be built if additional funds later become available. Some projects do not lend themselves to scaling back, and on those projects staff will request reallocation of other DD funds.

In the 2003 report to City Council, the Municipal Boathouse project was estimated to cost \$8.2 million, but was allocated only \$6.5 million of DD funds. No outside grant funding has been received for this project, and due to discovery of a deteriorated foundation plus significant increases in construction cost inflation, an additional \$3 million is needed.

In the case of the Municipal Boathouse, reducing the scope of work would be difficult. The size of the building is fixed. The majority of work is related to replacing the deteriorated underwater foundation, seismic bracing, ADA compliance, Title 24 energy compliance, and basic building systems. Some areas that could potentially be scaled back would be to install cheaper and less

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durable finish materials, and cheaper and less efficient heating and cooling systems. This route would lower the initial cost, but would result in higher maintenance and operating costs and the need to replace elements sooner.

In March 2005, City Council authorized the reallocation of \$1.2 million from the Sailboat House project Series A funds towards the Municipal Boathouse/ Lakeside Drive project. Staff will be coming before City Council soon to propose reallocating an additional \$3 million from the Sailboat House project Series B funds. Fundraising efforts for the Sailboat House will continue, and the scope of work will be reduced to meet the funds available.

## RECOMMENDATION(S) AND RATIONALE

### 1. Recommendation - Removal of Existing Trees:

**Staff recommends that the Measure DD Lake Merritt projects proceed with the current plan to remove 224 existing trees.** The number of trees requested for removal has been reduced from the original number of 307 based on a concerted effort to save some of the mature trees that do not directly impact the construction of park improvements.

The tree removal permits for the projects were issued on April 13, and one appeal has been filed. This appeal will be heard by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission on May 10. If a further appeal is requested, the matter will be presented to the City Council for a final determination.

### 2. Recommendation - Traffic Impacts:

**Staff recommends that Measure DD Lake Merritt projects proceed with the currently proposed roadway improvements on 12<sup>th</sup> Street, on Lakeshore Avenue, and at El Embarcadero.** The traffic studies for the 12<sup>th</sup> Street project indicate that the Levels of Service for traffic will be acceptable. The projected traffic congestion along 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue will be mitigated in the future with the addition of three traffic signals in the future (prior to year 2025).

The intent of the reconfiguration of Lakeshore Avenue is to transform the street from a main roadway into a pedestrian and park friendly, neighborhood street. The proposed configuration of two vehicular lanes will have appropriately sized left turn pockets, and will allow for the installation of class II bike lanes in each direction. A key goal of the Bicycle Master Plan is to have these class II bike lanes encircling Lake Merritt. Average traffic speeds will be reduced but the Level of Service for traffic will be acceptable. In addition, future traffic patterns should adjust accordingly with usage.

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At El Embarcadero, closure of the existing, southern traffic couplet will generate added traffic congestion during peak use hours. With the installation of an overlap right turn lane for southbound Lakeshore Avenue, traffic delays will be mitigated and the Level of Service for traffic will be acceptable. There may be periods of heavy congestion during the afternoon peak use, but the duration of these periods should be brief.

### 3. Recommendation - Location and Configuration of the Parking Lot at the Municipal Boathouse

**Staff recommends the construction of a 52-space parking lot north of the Municipal Boathouse as originally proposed and designed, with the installation of additional street trees to screen the view from neighboring buildings.** The 52-spaces of the proposed lot represents no-change to the total number of off-street parking spaces currently in existence at the site. An essential component for the success of a future tenant (i.e. restaurant or any other type of occupant) of the Municipal Boathouse building is to have a minimum amount of convenient parking. The proposed 52-space parking lot still does not provide a restaurant with the full amount of desired parking spaces, and on-street parking and other local parking lots will also need to be used.

The proposed consolidated parking lot will provide efficient circulation of traffic, have a dedicated entry and exit to allow for control and closure of the lot, promote Lake Merritt water quality by filtering storm waters with a bio-swale, and allow for the construction of multi-use paths along the shoreline. The loss of the large green space with the construction of the proposed parking lot is not desired, but it does present the most efficient and economical solution to the parking needs of the Boathouse. The sight lines of the proposed parking lot will be slightly softened with the parking lot constructed at a lower elevation than the sidewalk, and with the addition of some street trees. If desired, more street trees along Lakeside Drive can be added to satisfactorily screen the parking lot. Park users will be able to enjoy new landscaped terraces around the Boathouse's Lake shoreline, and a new four-acre green space that is being constructed as part of the adjacent 12<sup>th</sup> Street reconstruction project.

The construction of an alternate parking lot to the south of the Boathouse is not preferred because the dead-end configuration is not efficient, the driveway must be shared with the Camron Stanford House, additional mature trees will need to be removed, additional grading and retaining structures will need to be built due to the elevation differences, the multi-use path will be interrupted by the parking lot, and there is no opportunity for a properly sized bio-swale to improve Lake water quality. Alternatives to reduce the size of the parking lot are not practical due to the requirements of the future Boathouse users.

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The options to increase on-street parking by converting parallel parking to angled parking and by constructing a frontage road to increase parallel parking have both been studied from a traffic flow perspective. If Lakeside Drive is reduced to two-lanes of through traffic, unacceptable congestion will occur at 14<sup>th</sup> Street. Diagonal parking on a busy street also introduces safety issues. Options that require the elimination of the class II bike lanes from the construction plans are also not favored. An objective of both the Bicycle Master Plan and the Lake Merritt Master Plan is for the installation of class II bike lanes on Lakeside Drive. Additional costs for curb relocation, sidewalk expansion, streetlight relocation, drainage modifications, and retaining wall construction will be incurred if on-street parking is expanded. A combination of expanded on-street parking with a reduced size parking lot is not recommended because of the loss of parkland due to widening the street, potential loss of class II bike lanes, and the additional construction costs. More detailed pros and cons of the neighbors' proposed plan are listed on page 3.

#### 4. Recommendation – Relocation of the Exterior Restroom at the Municipal Boathouse

**Staff recommends the location of the new exterior restroom be moved from its originally planned position at the far north end of the proposed parking lot to a new position that is at the south end of the proposed parking lot (refer to Exhibit F of original agenda report, Page 11, Restroom Alternative D).** This recommended location physically separates the restroom from the Boathouse but is not significantly far (approximately 100 feet) and allows for some level of monitoring by Boathouse staff, it is adjacent to the multi-use path, and the construction costs are slightly less since the utility improvements are reduced.

Maintaining the location of the current restroom building is not recommended. Construction costs would be reduced but the restroom would still allow for areas of concealment and thus create greater concerns for public safety. In addition, the historic setting of the Boathouse is greatly detracted with the existing location of the restroom. Significant construction costs for utilities and a sewer lift station make any proposed location for the restroom south of the Boathouse impracticable.

#### 5. Recommendation – Street Reconfiguration of El Embarcadero

**Staff recommends that the reconfiguration of El Embarcadero be constructed as originally planned with the closure of the south traffic couplet, and the conversion of the north traffic couplet to two-way traffic (one lane westbound and two lanes eastbound).** The planned reconfiguration is consistent with the Grand Lake Green Link Plan, the Adams Point Urban Design Plan, and the Lake Merritt Master Plan. This layout creates a vision for the expansion of the Park, the construction of a formal plaza with a multi-use path, and a large entryway to the Pergola structure. The plan requires the expansion of the roadway two feet towards the Lakeview Library but does preserve the existing row of London Plane trees across the street.

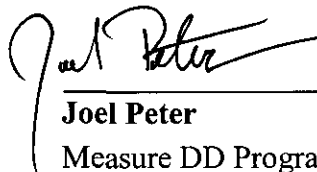
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Closure of El Embarcadero is not being considered because of the severe traffic congestion that it would create on the surrounding streets. Closure of the north traffic couplet and the conversion of the south couplet to two-way traffic are not recommended. A conversion of the southern couplet to two-way traffic is contrary to the intent of the Lake Merritt Master Plan because it would not allow for park expansion and the creation of a plaza adjacent to the Pergola. The continuity of the Park is broken if users are required to cross traffic at El Embarcadero.

**ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Staff requests that City Council accept this supplemental report and take action accepting staff's recommendations for the Measure DD Lake Merritt projects.

Respectfully submitted,



**Joel Peter**  
Measure DD Program Manager  
Office of the City Administrator

**Attachments:**

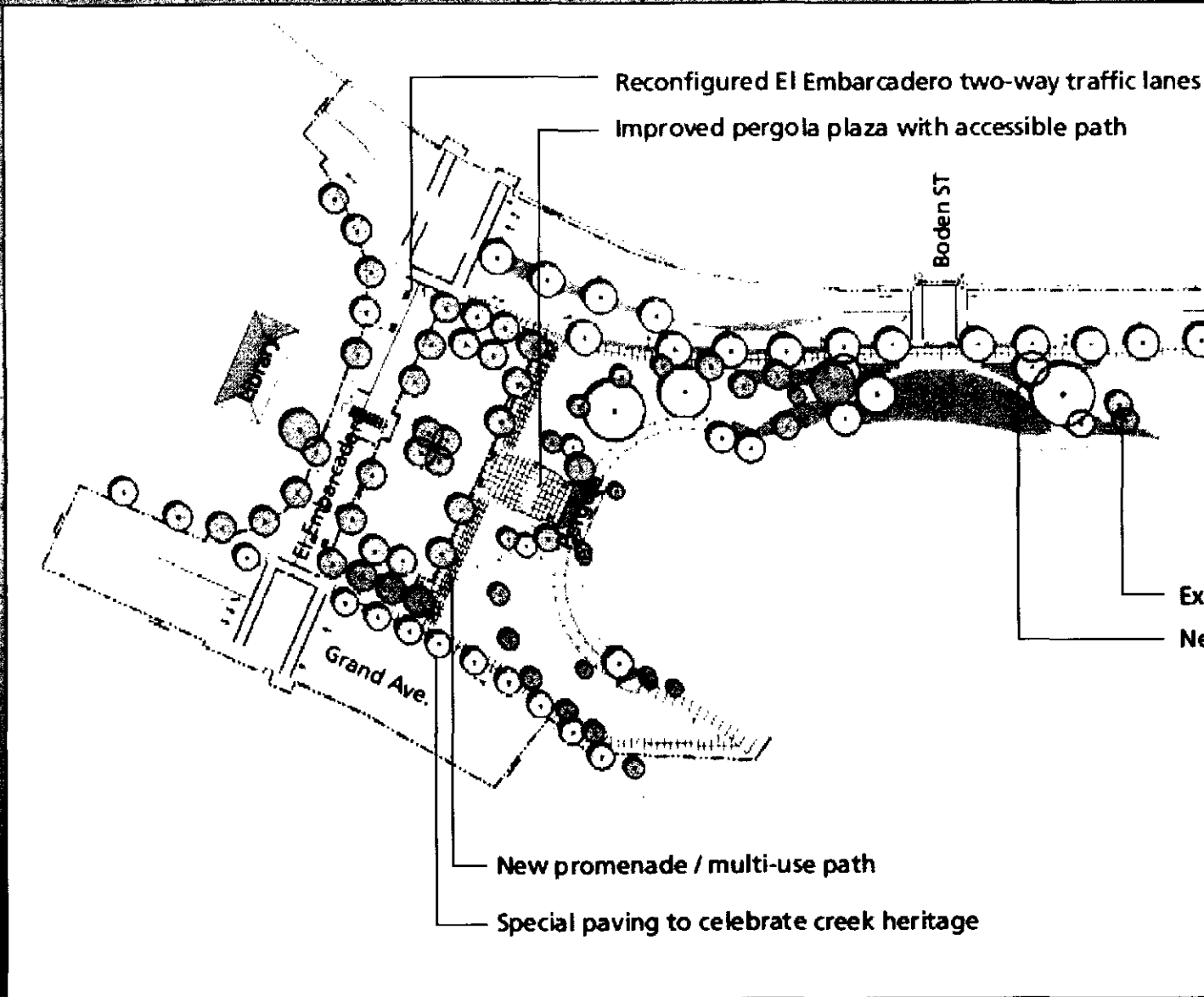
- Exhibit G – El Embarcadero
- Exhibit H – Lakeshore Ave.
- Exhibit I – Municipal Boathouse, City Proposal
- Exhibit J – Municipal Boathouse, Neighbors' Proposal

APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO THE  
CITY COUNCIL:

  
**OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR**

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El Embarcadero



Existing



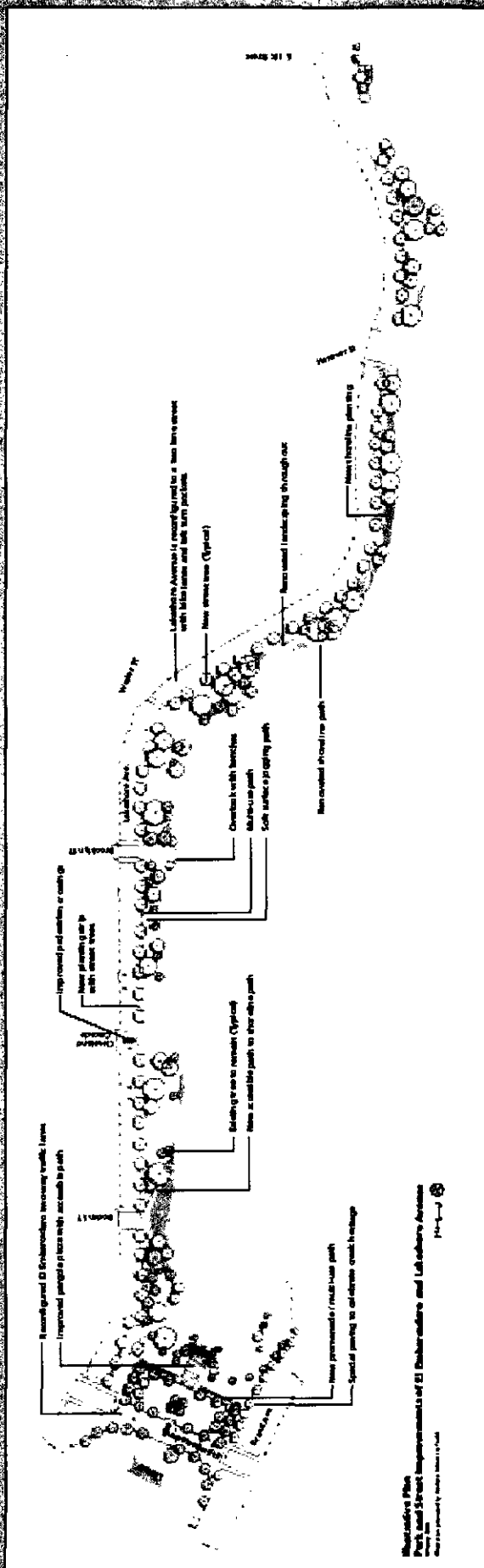
Proposed (approx. 5 years)

Park and Street Improvements of El Embarcadero and Lakeshore Avenue

Lake Merritt Master Plan Implementation

City of Oakland

Illustration provided by Wallace Roberts & Todd



Rehabilitation and Labors Area Site Plan

Lakeshore Ave



Existing



Proposed (approx. 5 years)

**Park and Street Improvements of El Embarcadero and Lakeshore Avenue**  
Lake Merritt Master Plan Implementation

City of Oakland

Illustration provided by Wallace Roberts & Todd

1520 Lakeside Drive Oakland, CA



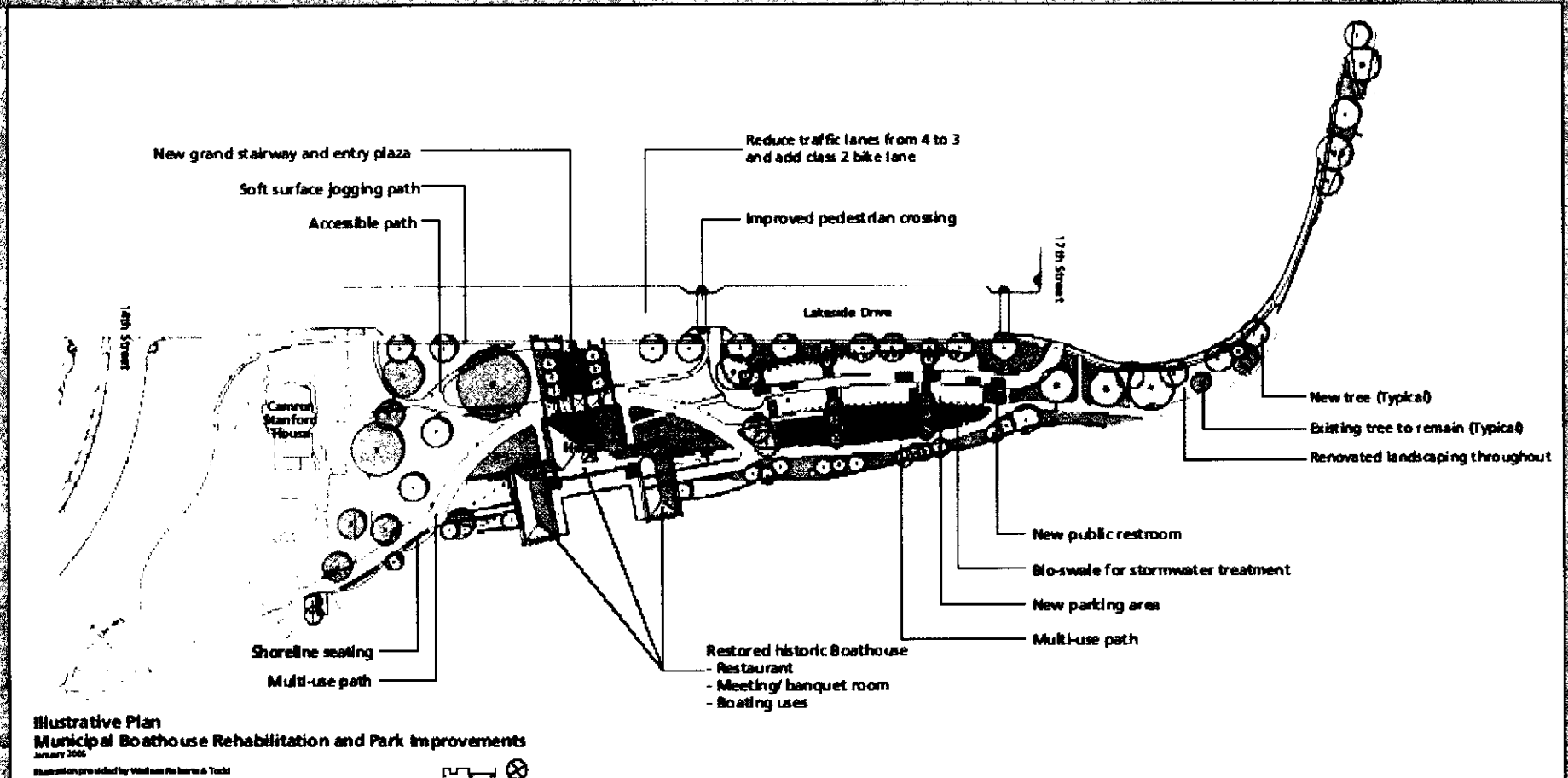
Google

Pointer: 37.48103917° N, 122.11041907° W, elev: 11 ft

Streaming | 100%

Live alt: 10.11 ft

EXHIBIT I-1



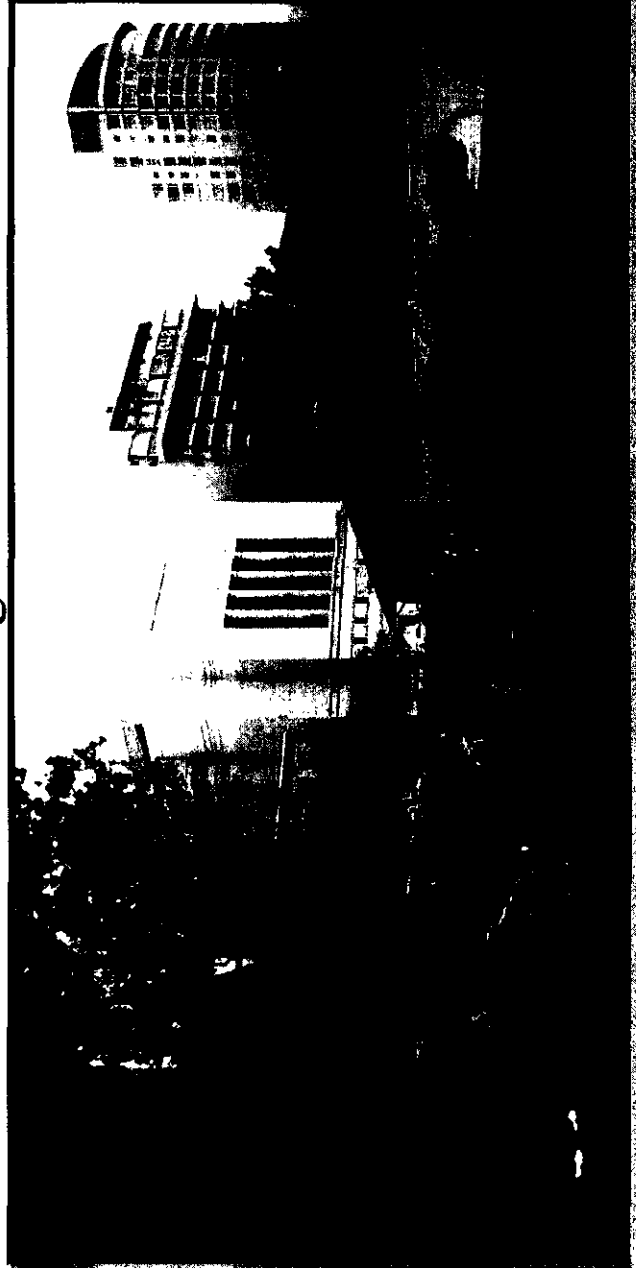
**Illustrative Plan**  
**Municipal Boathouse Rehabilitation and Park Improvements**  
 January 2005  
 Illustration provided by William R. Horn & Todd

# Municipal Boathouse View (south side)

EXHIBIT I-3

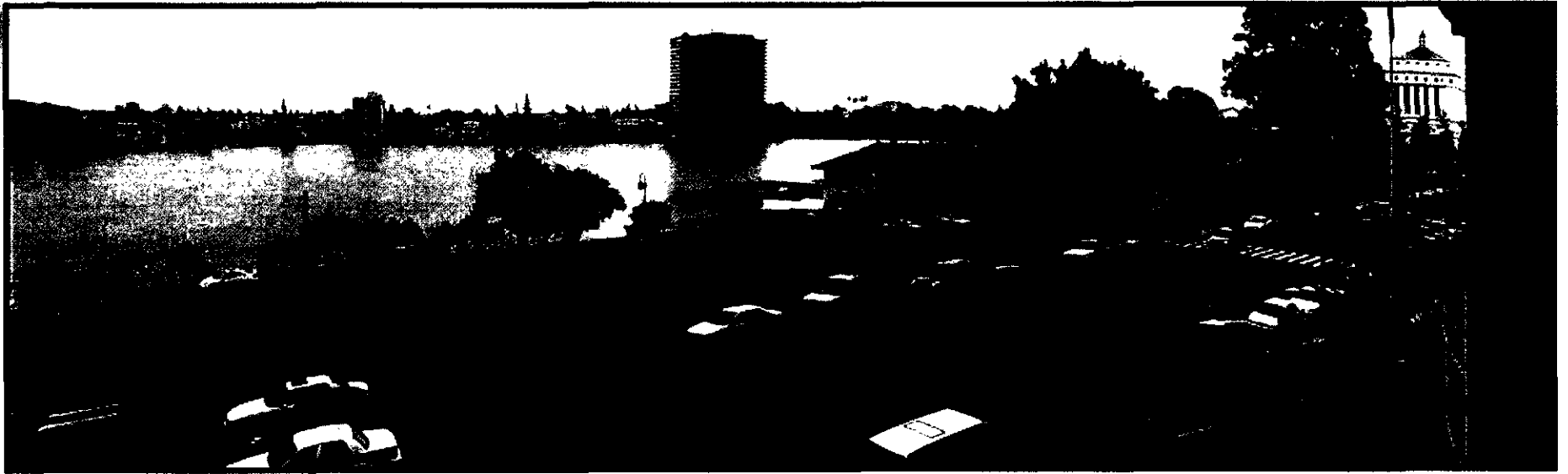


Existing View

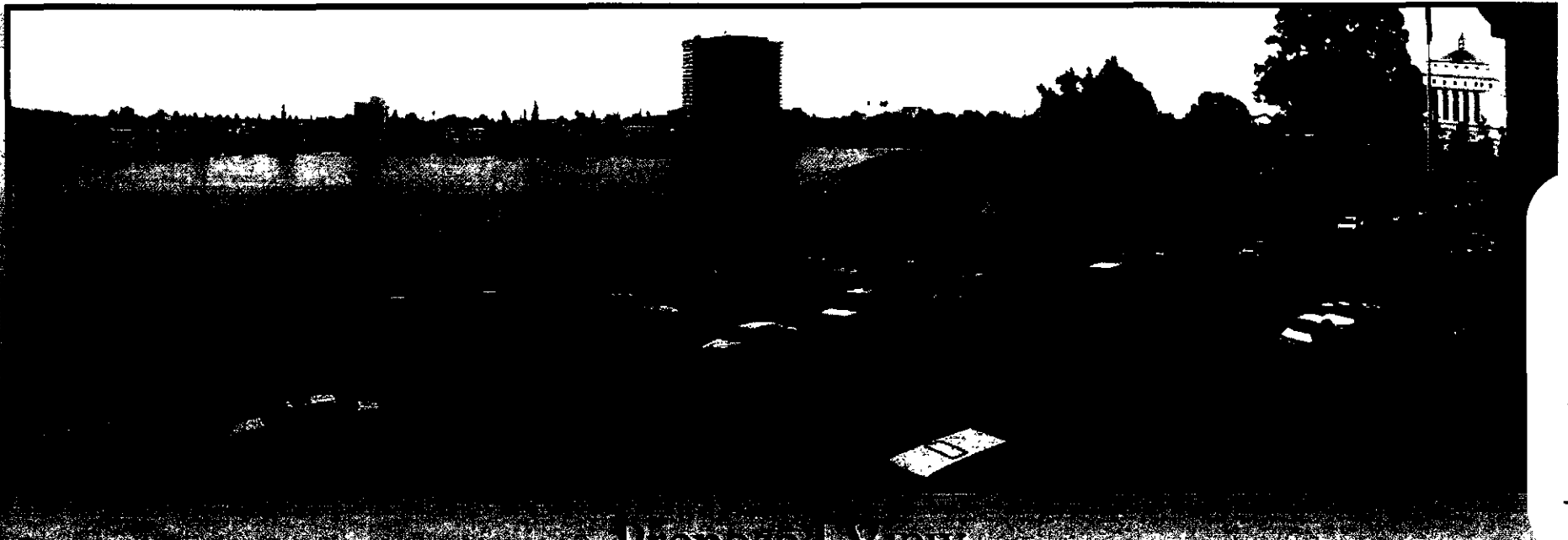


Proposed View

# View From 1555 Lakeside Dr



Existing View



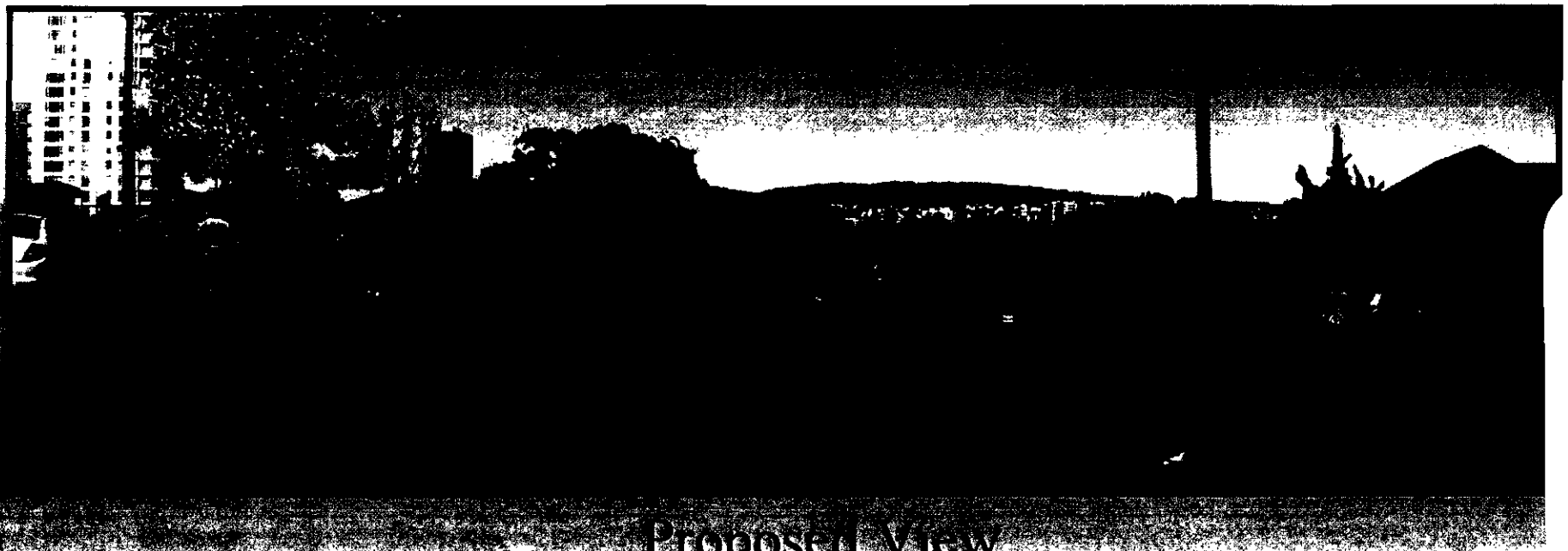
Proposed View



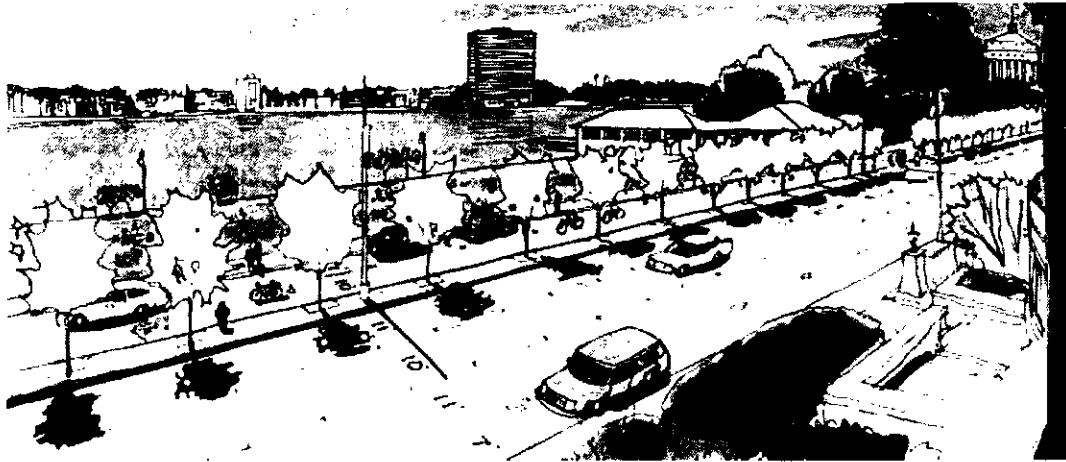
# Municipal Boathouse Lawn Area



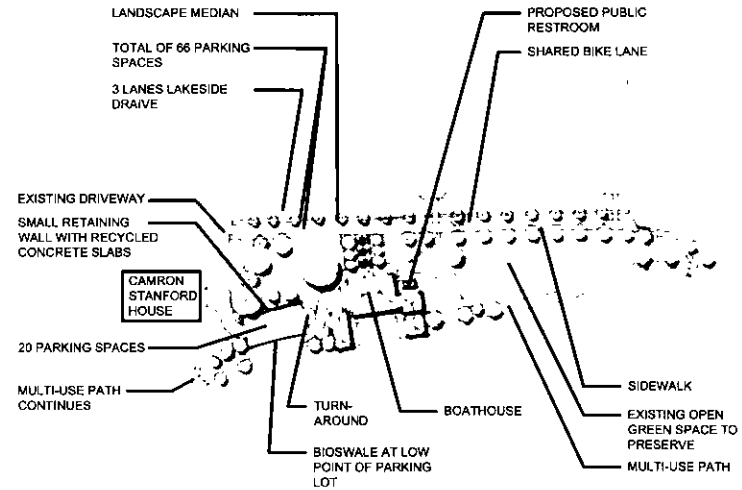
Existing View



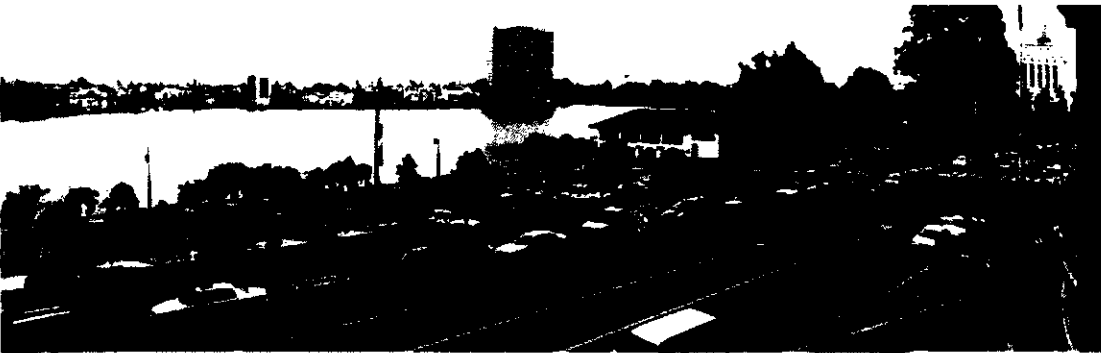
Proposed View



PERSPECTIVE OF OUR PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE



ALTERNATIVE PLAN PROPOSED BY THE COMMUNITY  
NOT TO SCALE



Proposed (approx. 8-10 years)

PARKING LOT PROPOSED BY THE CITY  
(8 TO 10 YEARS FROM NOW)



EXISTING GREEN OPEN SPACE



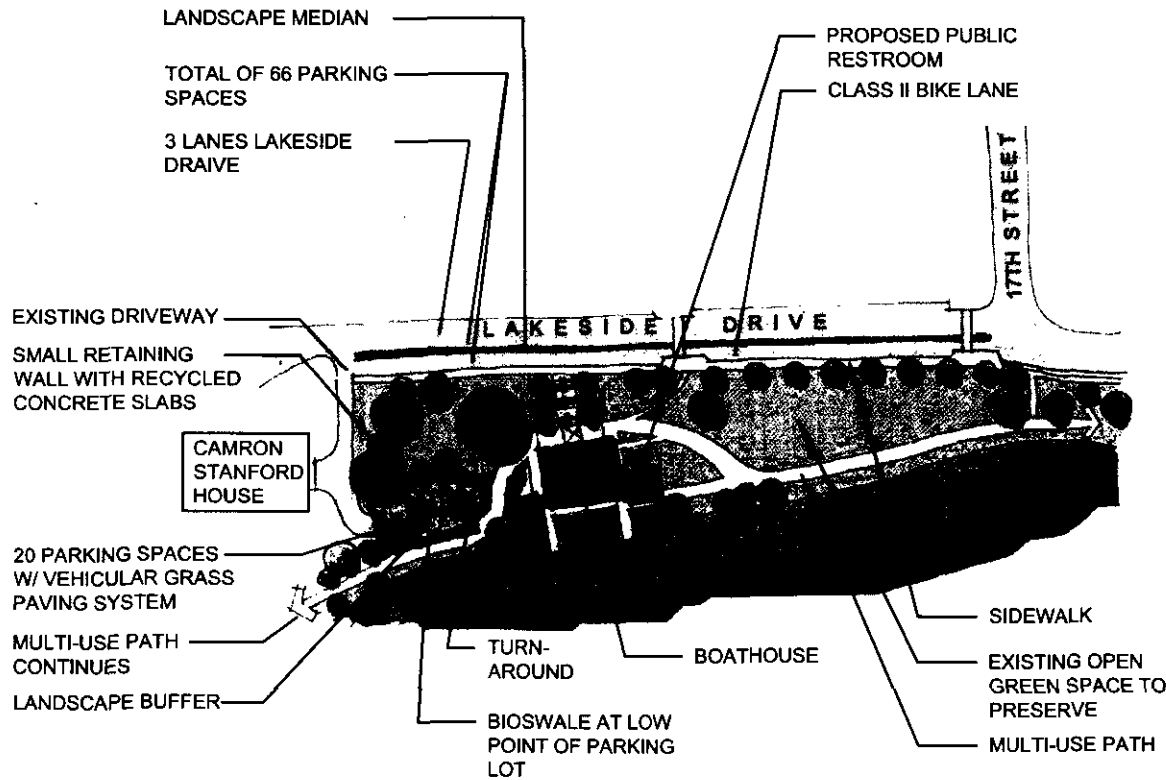
**Alternative Supported by Lakeside Drive Community**

**Pro**

- Large meadow at 17<sup>th</sup> Street is preserved and expanded. Preserving and expanding existing park space is in keeping with the objectives of Proposition DD as stated on the ballot measure.
- 27 off-street parking spaces plus 34 additional on-street parking spaces (not including 12 existing on-street spaces) equals 61 total new parking spaces, 7 spaces more than staff's original recommended plan.
- The proposed new 27 space parking lot on the south side of the boathouse is at the approximate location of an existing lot and is slightly larger than the existing lot. The new lot also uses the existing Camron Stanford House access road from Lakeside Drive, so no new access road is needed. Thus, there will be minimal impact on total green space and on the views of pedestrians, drivers, and residents and office workers in the buildings across the street.
- This new lot includes a bioswale to filter and cleanse runoff before it enters lake, and a small retaining wall using recycled concrete slabs.
- Using the existing lot location and access road should result in lower costs than other options that require new lot locations and access roads.
- Bicyclists can be accommodated; parking drive lane can be marked and designated for "share the road" conditions (Class III bike lane) and/or sidewalk can be widened and designated as multi-use path.
- Four to six foot wide median used to create the new frontage road provides additional safety for pedestrians parking on and crossing Lakeside Drive.
- Minimal tree removal compared to other options; trees can be added in median.
- Provides benefits to pedestrian safety at street crossings due to narrowed roadway.
- Line of parking on the street side of the median can be "no parking zone" in the morning to create a third line of through traffic during morning commute hours.

**Con**

- Class II bicycle lane may not be feasible.
- Additional 2' - 4' width needed for roadway will be taken from park, resulting in slightly narrower sidewalk.

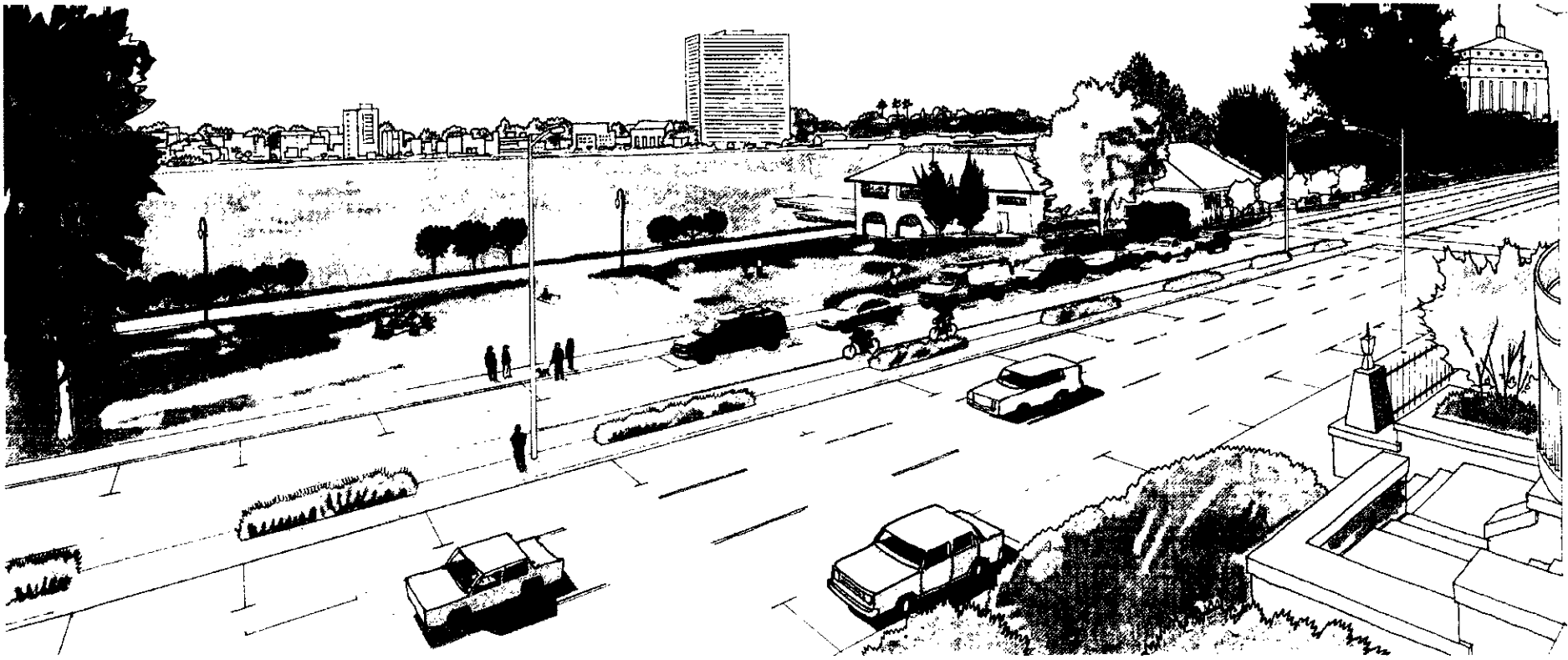


ALTERNATIVE PLAN PROPOSED BY THE COMMUNITY  
NOT TO SCALE

#### Alternative Supported by Lakeside Drive Community

- **MEADOW IS PRESERVED:** Large meadow at 17<sup>th</sup> Street is preserved and expanded. Preserving and expanding existing park space is in keeping with the objectives of Proposition DD as stated on the ballot measure
- **CONTINUOUS CLASS II BICYCLE LANE:** The new frontage road in our plan includes a class II bicycle lane.
- **ADDITIONAL SAFETY FOR ALL USERS:** Lakeside Drive is narrowed to two lanes, calming traffic with resulting safety benefits to pedestrians, bicyclists, and even drivers. Four to six foot wide median used to create the new frontage road provides additional safety for pedestrians parking on and crossing Lakeside Drive
- **MORE TOTAL PARKING SPACES:** 20 to 27 off-street parking spaces plus 34 additional on-street parking spaces (not including 32 existing on-street spaces) equals 54 to 61 total new parking spaces, 2 to 9 more space than the city staff's recommended plan
- **FAR LESS PAVED AREA:** The parking lot in our plan is less than half the size of the 52 space lot staff recommends. In addition, our lot does not require any new access roads, since it uses the Camron Stanford House access road. City staff's 52 space lot requires new access and exit roads, which means even more paving of open meadow space.
- **USING ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE PAVING MORE PRACTICAL WITH SMALLER PAVED AREA:** the parking lot in our plan could be built using porous and more natural looking turf cell or reinforced grass paving. Since our proposed lot is much smaller than staff's 52 space lot, our lot would be considerably cheaper to build and maintain, so using these more environmentally sustainable materials would be more practical.
- **BIO-SWALE TO FILTER PARKING LOT RUNOFF:** Our plan includes a bio-swale between the parking lot and the lake to filter runoff. The bio-swale incorporate plantings to soften the view from the multi-use trail.
- **MINIMUM TREE REMOVAL** compared to other options: trees and other plantings can also be added in the new median.
- **THIRD TRAFFIC LANE CAN ADDED DURING MORNING COMMUTE:** The line of parking on the street side of the median can be a "no parking zone" in the morning to create a third lane of through traffic during morning commute hours, and thus achieve traffic "level of service" within city requirements at all times.

EXHIBIT J-2  
REVISED  
NEIGHBORS'  
PLAN



PERSPECTIVE OF OUR PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE

REVISED  
NEIGHBORS'  
PLAN

EXHIBIT J-3