



Message from the Port Commission Chairman

By Ralph Garcia

On behalf of the Port Commission and staff, I want to commend the City Council and Planning Commission for adopting a draft new General Plan and advancing it for the required Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

After the EIR, the General Plan will come back before the Planning Commission and Council for public input and decision. Having served 10 years on the Planning Commission before joining the Port Commission in 2005, including two years as chairman, I know the hard work of the staff, Planning Commission, and City Council to reach this stage.

The Port Commission is pleased about the many positive things the draft GP says about the Port and industrial uses along Seaport Boulevard.

Some of the highlights in the GP relating to the Port include:

- After consulting with the Port about the most efficient use of Port land for the Port, recycling, and/or other industrial uses, prepare a Port Area Master Plan. This plan shall identify land area needed for Port-related uses and establish a variety of buffers between the Port area and adjacent properties.
- Ensure that the design of waterfront neighborhoods does not have an undue adverse impact on the Port area or Port uses.
- The Port is one of the city's great assets. (General Plan) policies emphasize the value provided by the Port and focus on retention; providing for efficient use of land to support the Port, Port-related, and Port-dependent industries and minimizing potential land use conflicts that would not support Port use. In some instances, light industrial uses are compatible with the heavier industrial and/or Port related uses. Policies also include encouraging development of a passenger ferry terminal station near the Port.

The draft General Plan recognizes that marine-related industrial uses in the Port area are valuable to the community. One of the goals of the General Plan is to ensure that incompatible land uses do not adversely impact Port operations or impede potential growth."

Rail Improvements Help Port Customers Move Cargo

Union Pacific (UP) Railroad Company's \$2 million track upgrade of the Seaport Boulevard line serving the Port of Redwood City is nearly completed. In conjunction with this project, the Port has finished eight new grade crossings to Port property at a cost of \$380,000.

The improvements have already helped Port customer Sims Metals, which traditionally receives scrap metal by truck before shredding it and shipping it to the Far East as recycled scrap. Due to a surplus of shredded metal in the Rocky Mountains and Midwest regions, Sims received 531 rail cars of shredded metal in recent weeks. This was made more efficient by the rail track improvements.

The scrap metal loaded on the railcars, each



weighing approximately 50 metric tons, ultimately was processed at the Sims facility at the Port and loaded onto ships for export to Asia.

The UP project to upgrade track running the length of Seaport Boulevard included new welded steel track, new wood ties, and much heavier ballast rock for the rail road bed. In addition to Sims Metals, other shippers utilizing this trackage include Granite Rock, Cemex, Basic Chemical Solutions, and Lyngso Garden Materials.

Port Executive Director Michael J. Giari reports that the ports of Redwood City and San Francisco are working with the Seaport Industrial Association (SIA) and private companies and organizations to ensure continued freight rail service between San Francisco and San Jose. These 26 business, labor, and public organizations have formed a group to work toward that goal, called the Peninsula Freight Rail Users Group (PFRUG).

They are concerned that the proposed electrification and operation of high speed rail service of the Peninsula Caltrain commute line could restrict freight rail.

“Any restrictions on freight rail would lead to an increase in cargo being shipped via truck, resulting in more traffic and greenhouse gas emissions,” says Greg Greenway, co-founder of PFRUG and executive director for the SIA as well.

“The Bay Area economy depends on reliable movement of goods to market, and rail is the most efficient and environmentally friendly way to move goods,” Greenway says. “The Peninsula freight rail corridor is a vital link in our regional transportation system, complementing Caltrain passenger service and benefiting the public.”

He cites these benefits for Peninsula freight accessibility:

- On the Peninsula, 26 shippers move about two million tons of cargo per year –everything from food to building supplies to recycled materials.
- Peninsula freight rail shippers provide thousands of jobs directly, and support thousands more throughout the economy.
- Moving cargo by rail on the Peninsula takes about 200,000 truck trips off our local highways every year.
- On the Peninsula alone, using rail instead of trucks to move freight reduces greenhouse gas emissions by more than 4,000 tons per year.

Nationally, railroads account for only 2% of all transportation related greenhouse gas emissions while moving 43% of the nation’s goods.

As Caltrain plans to modernize its tracks and implement high-speed passenger rail service, it is critical that policymakers also plan for future freight rail service, according to the position advanced by PFRUG.

“Two factors are key,” explains Greenway. “Electrical lines for passenger trains need to be high enough to allow for freight trains, and operating hours must be preserved for freight. PFRUG advocates responsible and balanced transportation planning, ensuring that our public investments in passenger rail service continue to support the public benefits of freight rail.”

Port of Redwood City Board Chairman Ralph Garcia says that the Port of Redwood City requires continued and expanded freight rail access to support the local and regional economy.

“The existing freight rail line along the Peninsula corridor must be maintained to preserve freight access,” Garcia said.



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Port Channel Deepening Project Benefits From Stimulus Funds

The Port of Redwood City navigation channel was deepened to its authorized depth of 30 feet, utilizing funds from the stimulus American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers awarded a \$9.1 million contract for the project which was completed in early December.

Dredge materials were put to reusable environmental use for tidal marsh restoration at the Inner Bair Island adjacent to the Port and the Hamilton Wetland Restoration project, four miles east of Novato in Marin County.

The Port-Corps partnership began the deepening effort when the Port water depth was 26.5 feet. At this depth, many of the commercial ships that enter the Port must arrive “light loaded,” thus limiting commerce. The new project provides for the maximum authorized 30-foot depth for the first time in years.

“At 30 feet, we are maximizing the port’s efficiency in handling cargo vessels and increasing the Port’s potential commercial usage,” Port Commission Chairman Ralph Garcia said.

“The stimulus funds make it possible for us to dredge to 30 feet,” said Corps Project Manager Joel Pliskin. “The stimulus money also accelerated our schedule by at least one year.”

The project is assisting in the completion of two of the Bay Area’s most important environmental projects, Inner Bair Island and Hamilton, to meet the goal of increasing environmentally beneficial wetlands around the SF Bay.

The Port’s last maintenance dredging, a year ago, marked the first beneficial reuse of dredge materials at Inner Bair Island as part of its ongoing restoration to tidal wetland.

“It is the ultimate recycling,” Redwood City Mayor Jeff Ira said.

Now the dredge materials will be shared at Inner Bair Island and Hamilton.

The Corps of Engineers, in partnership with the State Coastal Conservancy and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, is working to restore the former Hamilton Army Airfield and the adjacent North Antenna Air Field back to a natural tidal wetland. Since being diked off from the Bay and protected by levees, the site has dropped below the elevation of surrounding properties.

In order to restore the land to natural wetlands, the site is being raised to an appropriate elevation in order to re-create the wetlands through the placement of dredged material.

Each year, three to six million cubic yards of sediment must be dredged to maintain safe navigation in and around the San Francisco Bay. In order to responsibly manage such large amounts of sediment, the San Francisco Bay Long Term Management Strategy for Dredging was established as the “regional dredging team” for the San Francisco Bay Area. The LTMS ensures that the dredged materials are being used in mutually beneficial environmental situations.



Work at the Hamilton wetland restoration project near Novato, involving the former Air Force base property, is aided by the materials from the Port of Redwood City deepening project

Maritime Facility Project Advances with Selection of Engineer

The Port Commission has awarded a \$95,788 contract to Moffatt & Nichol for engineering and construction design for the Port’s Multi-Agency Maritime Facility project. This project will replace the existing gangway/dock currently located in between wharves 4 and 5, adjacent to the boat launch ramp and the public access area.

The new facility will serve as the South Bay’s primary waterside law enforcement platform for security and emergency response operations. In addition to the Port’s vessel, agencies that will utilize the facility include Redwood City Police and Fire, San Mateo County Sheriff, the U.S. Coast Guard, the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, and other mutual aid agencies.

Port Executive Director Michael J. Giari reports that the project is to be funded in its entirety from the state of California Proposition 1B Port Security Grant funds.

Update on Port Commodity Movement

Total tonnage for all commodities crossing over Port docks during the first quarter of Fiscal Year (FY) 2010, which ended September 30, was 222,881 metric tons. This was a decrease of 34.5% over the first quarter of the previous FY, as the recession in Bay Area construction industry continued to impact Port imports of building materials.

Shredded scrap metal (**photo to the right**) exports by Sims Metals, however, increased over 45,000 metric tons over the first quarter of the previous year to 126,627 metric tons. Due to a surplus of shredded scrap metal in the Rocky Mountains and Midwest, Sims received 531 rail cars of shredded scrap during the first quarter.

The more than 50,000 metric tons of recycled metal transported by rail was processed at the Sims facility at the Port and eventually loaded on a ship for export to the Far East.

Fifteen vessels made calls during the first quarter compared to 17 the prior year. Approximate percentage breakdown of imports by commodity: sand 18%, aggregates 11%, bauxite 6%, domestic sand 3%, gypsum 3%; exports of scrap metal represented 57% of the commodities crossing Port docks.

Pabco Gypsum's Newark wallboard plant has reopened on a limited basis and is projecting its next gypsum import load from Mexico after January 1, Port Manager of Operations Don Snaman reported.



Hawaiian Chieftain Returns to Port February 22 for Public Tours

The topsail ketch **Hawaiian Chieftain** (pictured right) arrives February 22 at the Port of Redwood City to offer nine days of exciting sailing experiences that recreate the thrills of 18th-century maritime life.

The Chieftain will offer walk-aboard tours on weekday afternoons and on Saturday mornings during their visit. Schedule details are at www.historicalseaport.org.

The Hawaiian Chieftain is a replica of a typical 18th century European merchant trading vessel. Her hull shape and rigging are similar to those of Spanish explorer's ships used in the expeditions of the 18th Century along the California, Oregon, and Washington coasts.

Her design was influenced by the early colonial passenger and coastal packets that carried on coastal trade along the Atlantic coastal cities and towns. The coastal packet service was part of the coasting trade based on mercantile activity of the developing seaboard towns. The early packet ships were regular traders and were selected because they sailed remarkably well and could enter small ports with their shallow draft. Out of the gradual development of the Atlantic packet ship hull form came the ship design practices that helped produce some of the best of the clipper ships of the later 1850s.



Port Promotes Eric Napralla to New Position



Eric Napralla has been named to the new position of manager of development and compliance at the Port of Redwood City. Port Executive Director Mike Giari said that the new position combines business and economic development responsibilities with the challenge of working with Port tenants and other stakeholders on security, emergency preparedness, and environmental programs. "These relatively new areas of responsibility have taken an increasing important role in management of the Port," Giari said.

Napralla joined the port three years ago as assistant manager of operations after serving in the U.S. Coast Guard. "Eric has the ability, skills, and experience to fill this position and to be an important member of the Port management team working on this broad and important part of the Port's mission," Giari told port commissioners.

Photos from Dedication of Port's New Public Boat Launch Ramp

A rededication ceremony and ribbon-cutting to celebrate the recently renovated Port of Redwood City Boat Launch Ramp Facility was held during the late fall.

A \$1 million grant from the California Department of Boating and Waterways was used for construction of a new 2-lane V-Groove concrete launch ramp, installation of a handicap access boarding float (dock), storm drainage, pay station, and information kiosk, construction of a new turnaround and ready-lane, and renovation of the existing 2-unit restroom.

The Port's boat launch ramp is the only facility of its kind in the South Bay.



Port of Redwood City
San Francisco Bay

Port Commissioners

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Dick Claire, Vice Chairman
Lorianna Kastrop, Secretary
Larry Aikins, Commissioner
Richard Dodge, Commissioner

Michael J. Giari, Executive Director

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Photos (those with people taken by Byron Jacobs of Sequoia Yacht Club, one above taken by John Squire):

Top left illustrates a happy user of the new boat launch ramp, top right shows the new two lanes. Photo above pictures participants in the re-dedication ceremony: Port Executive Director Michael Giari, Port Commission Chairman Ralph Garcia, Sequoia Yacht Club former Commodore Petra Gilmore, and Redwood City Mayor (at the time) Rosanne Faust.

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