

August 28, 2023

Mr. William Hofman and Members of the Planning Commission  
City of San Diego  
202 C Street  
San Diego, CA 92101

RE: De Anza Natural Plan

Dear Chairman Hofman and Members of the Commission:

2851 Camino Del Rio South

Suite 200, Dept. A

San Diego, California

92108

619.683.5544

619.683.5585 FAX

[www.jwhalen.net](http://www.jwhalen.net)

This firm represents the San Diego Mission Bay Boat and Ski Club, a 60-year non-profit lessee in the De Anza Cove area of Mission Bay Park. We were hired to assist the Club in remaining in their current location until such time as they are relocated to their future home within South Shores Park. Currently, the City has not provided assurances that the Club will not be evicted and the Club is gravely concerned about their existence going forward. We have heard the Planning Commission date of August 31<sup>st</sup> to consider the De Anza Natural Plan is being moved to September. In case it is not, we send this letter.

As background, the De Anza Natural Plan stems from a settlement agreement between the City and the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board in connection with a large sewage spill into Mission Bay several years ago. The City was heavily fined for the millions of gallons of raw sewage that flowed from Tecolote Creek into Mission Bay. To make a very long story short, the City agreed in their settlement with the Water Board to create a wetlands restoration plan for the De Anza Cove area that's intended to improve water quality in Mission Bay, and in particular, Rose Creek.

Since we only got involved a few months ago, it took us a while to get up to speed due to the complexities of the De Anza Natural Plan and the many stakeholders. We read the draft Program EIR, reviewed scanty plans and looked fruitlessly for technical studies to support the conclusions made in the De Anza Natural Plan Program EIR. It turns out that none of these studies have been done and thus the PEIR is facially flawed.

Further, we reached out to the Water Board and learned that they too harbor concerns about the adequacy of the technical basis for the De Anza Natural Plan. Subsequent follow up discussions revealed that the City's "deadline" of August 31, 2023, to appear before the Planning Commission for a vote and the subsequent October City Council hearing is *actually* one year off. City staff appears to have misread the deadline in the extension letter. The actual deadline is October 14, 2024.

The good news here is that the necessary technical studies can now be done as well as providing assurances to the current recreational users that they will not be displaced.

Our request, should the Planning Commission still have a hearing on the De Anza Natural Plan on August 31<sup>st</sup>, is to take the same action (8-0) as the City's Park and Recreation Board took, which was to deny the Plan and remand it to staff to correct the deficiencies.

The Board recommended more studies to evaluate the De Anza Natural Project, including: 1) expected water quality improvements; 2) wetlands hydrology; and 3) sea level rise and adaptive retreat. They also recommended evaluation of the South Shores area, including remediating the old landfill, to expand recreation resources to other parts of the Bay. We concur completely with this action.

While not in the purview of the Planning Commission *per se*, please note the Club also needs to get an extension of their ground lease beyond month-to-month so that important repairs such as to the roof of the clubhouse can be made. Also, attached for your information is the newly completed conceptual plan for the relocated Boat & Ski Club. We are working with City staff separately to realize these plans in a General Development Permit.

We look forward to making these points at the hearing, whenever it is and please don't hesitate to let me know if you have any questions.

Very truly yours,

J. Whalen Associates, Inc.  
a California corporation



by: James E. Whalen  
President

cc: Councilmember Joe LaCava  
Councilmember Jennifer Campbell  
Heidi Von Blum (Planning Director)  
Kelley Stanco (Deputy Director)  
Steele Young (San Diego Mission Bay Boat & Ski Club)

Attachment



**Scott Chipman**  
**ADVOCATE**

# Mission Bay

Parks

Water

Tidal flow

Boat ramps

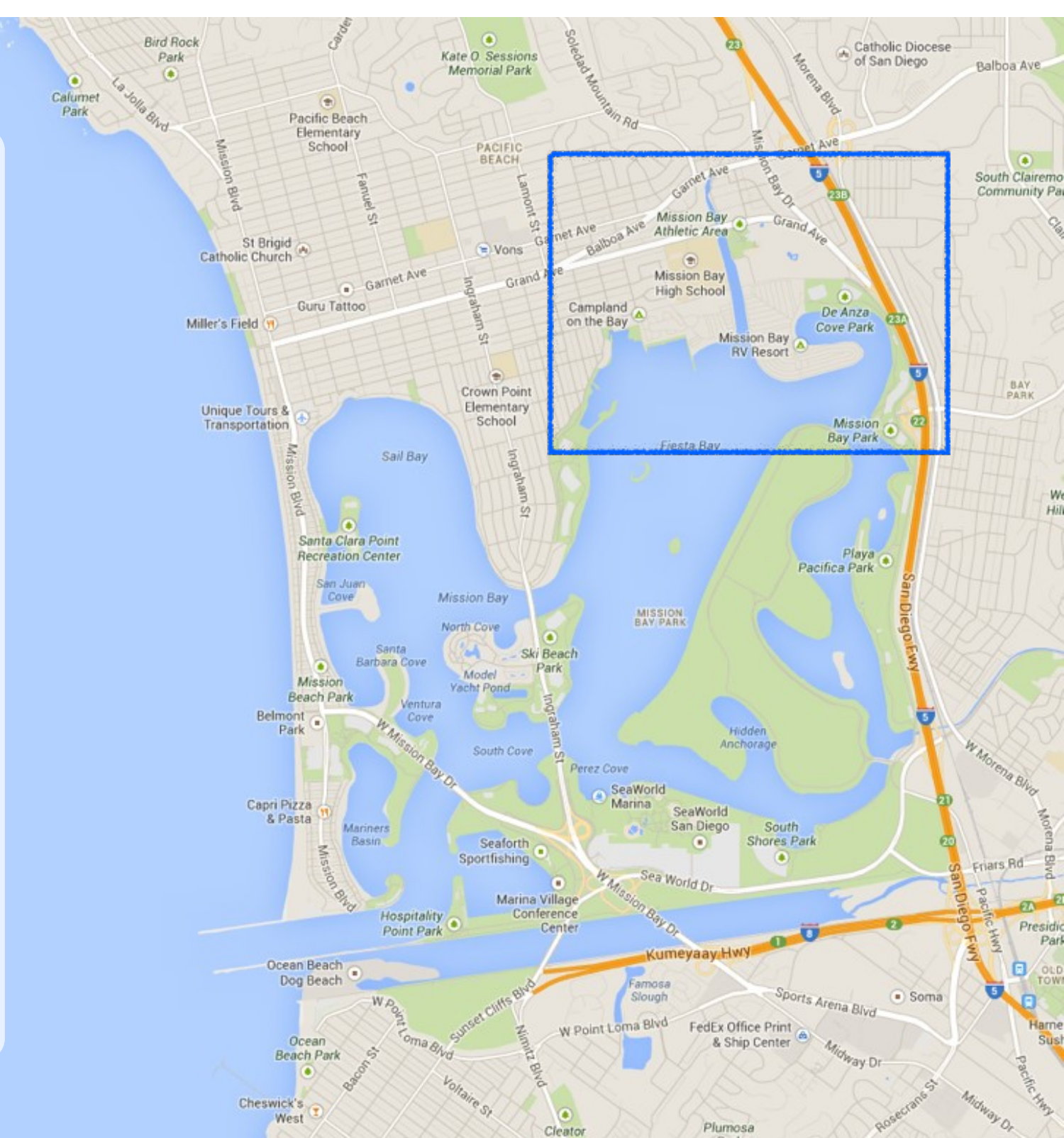
Skiing, sailing, rowing

Hotels

Marshland

Bike and walking paths

Watershed outfall





Youth Fields

Tennis Courts

MB Golf Course

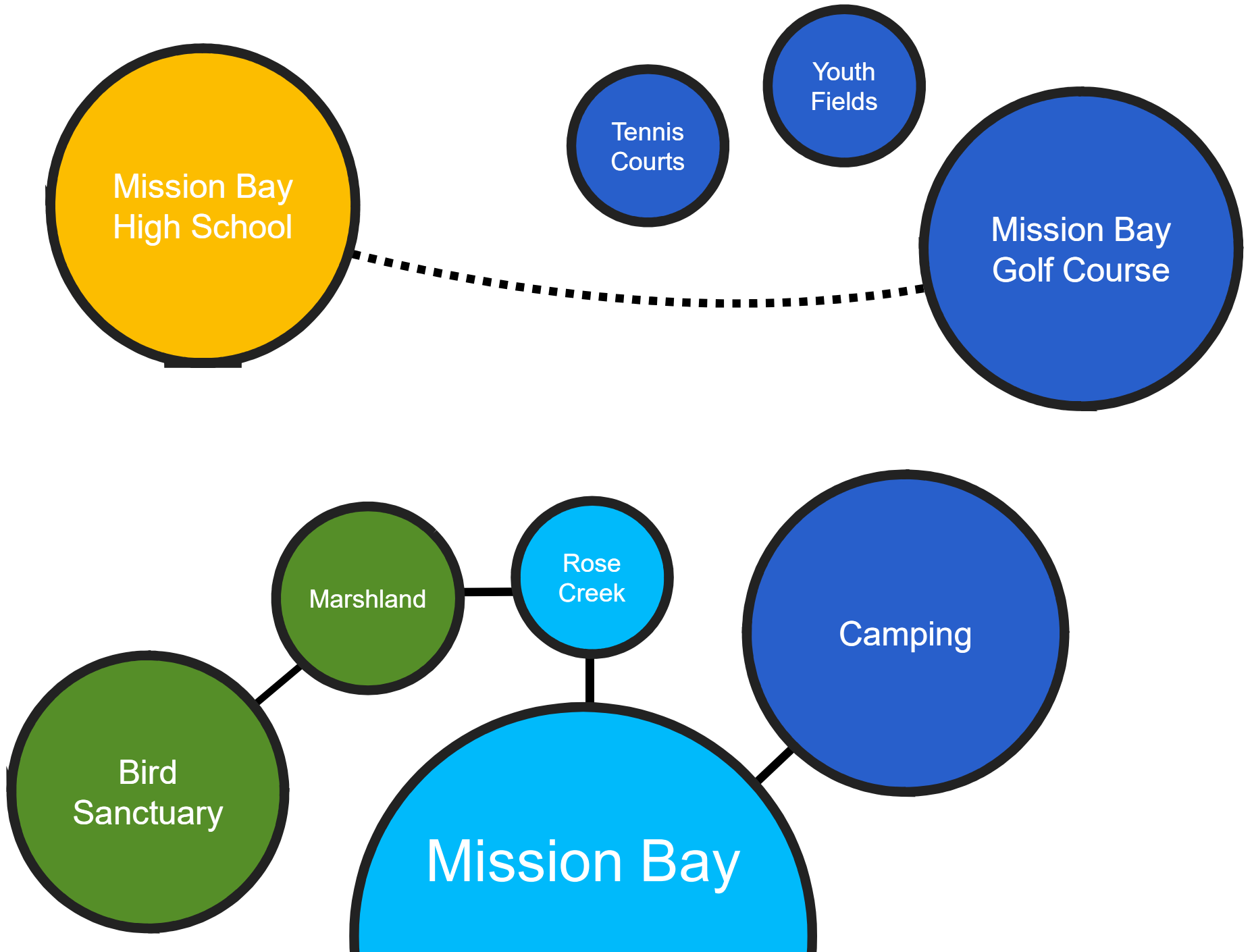
Mission Bay High School

Wildlife Preserve

De Anza Cove Park

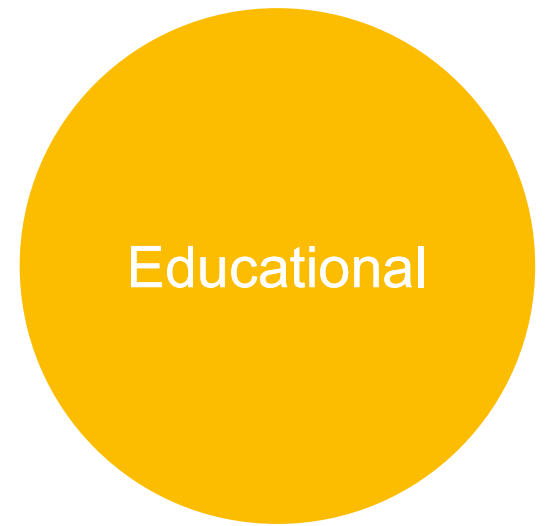
Campland by the Bay

Crown Point Park



# Mission Bay Gateway

*Linking and improving the educational, recreational, and natural environment of Mission Bay*



**A BALANCED PLAN**



TODAY



GRAND AVE

MISSION BAY DR

M.B.H.S.

ROSE CREEK

Mission Bay Golf Course

PACIFIC BEACH DR.

N. MISSION BAY DR

Mike Gotch Memorial Bridge

CAMPLAND

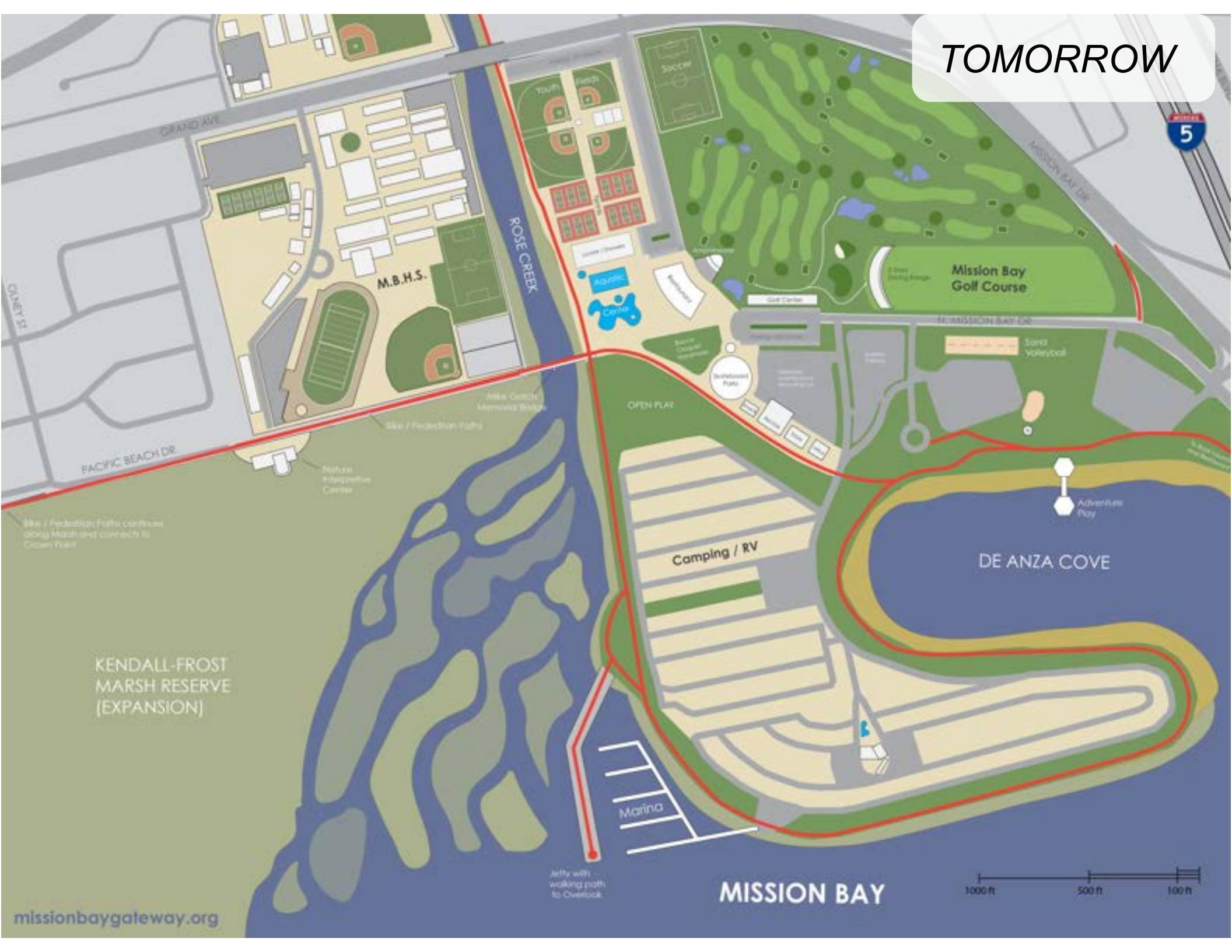
DE ANZA Trailer Park

DE ANZA COVE

KENDALL-FROST MARSH RESERVE

MISSION BAY

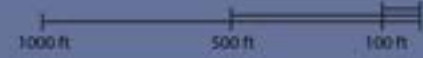
TOMORROW



KENDALL-FROST MARSH RESERVE (EXPANSION)

DE ANZA COVE

MISSION BAY



# 2022 De Anza Natural





Active  
Recreation

Joint  
Use

Camping / RV  
Camping

DE ANZA COVE

KENDALL-FROST  
MARSH RESERVE  
(EXPANSION)

MISSION BAY



# Expanding Marshland



# Wildlife Habitat

“Fencing also prevents access to the reserve”  
There has to be a better way.





# Nature Behind 8 foot Barbed Wire Fence

Some say there will be public access to the expanded marshland

There is no evidence of that





## Raised Bike/Walking Path over Marsh





# Water Quality



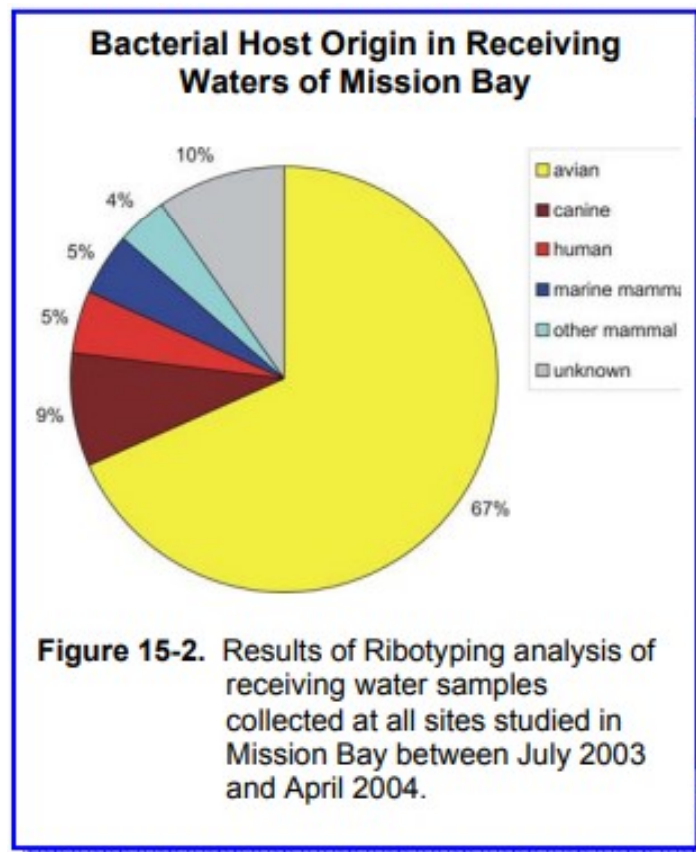
Expanded Marshland can act as a natural filter on the Rose Creek Watershed improving Mission Bay Water quality.

However the **#1** source of bacterial pollution in the bay is Bird Poop

Capture basins upstream may provide the best treatment opportunity

# Sources of Pollution

## Another Marsh Opportunity



# Recreational

Aquatic Center

Parkland

Bike Walking Paths

Youth Fields

Tennis Facilities

Camping

Golf Course

Skate Park

Amphitheater

Marina

Concessions



# Aquatic Center <sup>NEW</sup>

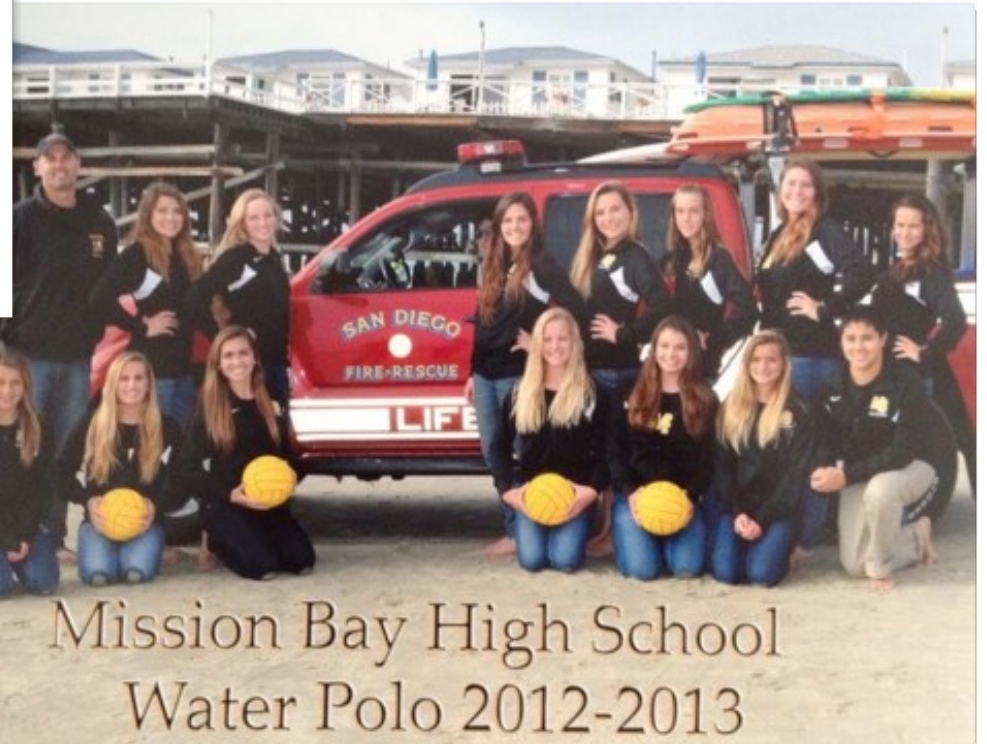
*A great place for local families to enjoy*



San Diego has over  
25 public pools but  
none in this area

# Aquatic Center <sup>NEW</sup>

*A home pool for Mission Bay High School Aquatics!*



Mission Bay High School  
Water Polo 2012-2013

# Park / Recreation Space



# Biking/Walking Trails







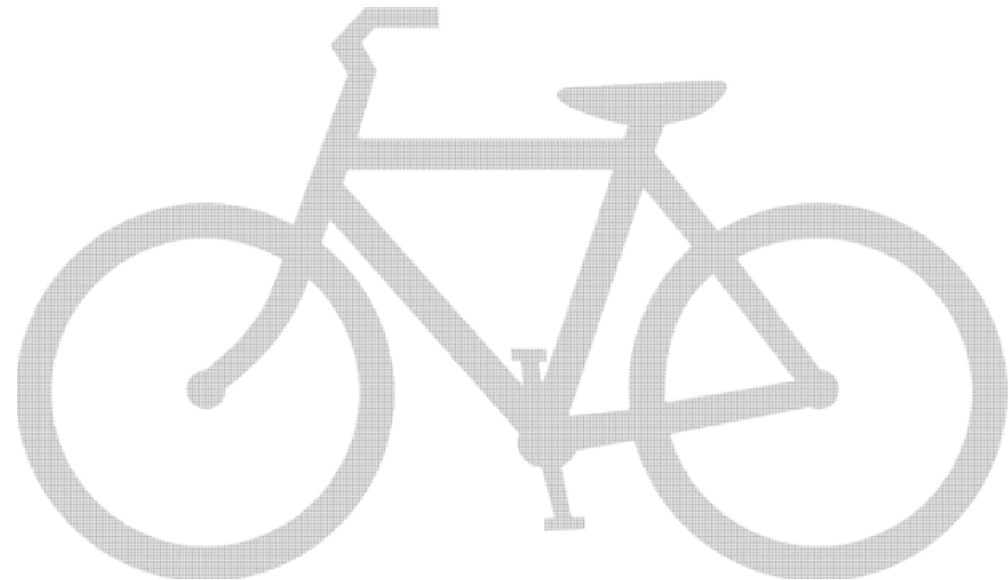
# Bike Paths

*Connecting Communities*

Connect De Anza Cove Park and Crown Point Park

Enhance and connect the Rose Creek Bike Trails with the Mission Bay Park Bike Trails

Create Easier Bike Access to Mission Bay / Pacific Beach from North Claremont, UCSD and University City



“Fencing also prevents access to the reserve”

There has to be a better way.



A Path Around the Park Should Stay Within the Park

# Camping

# 50+%

of Campland Visitors are San Diego locals

Camping is an inexpensive alternative to local hotels



# Even More...

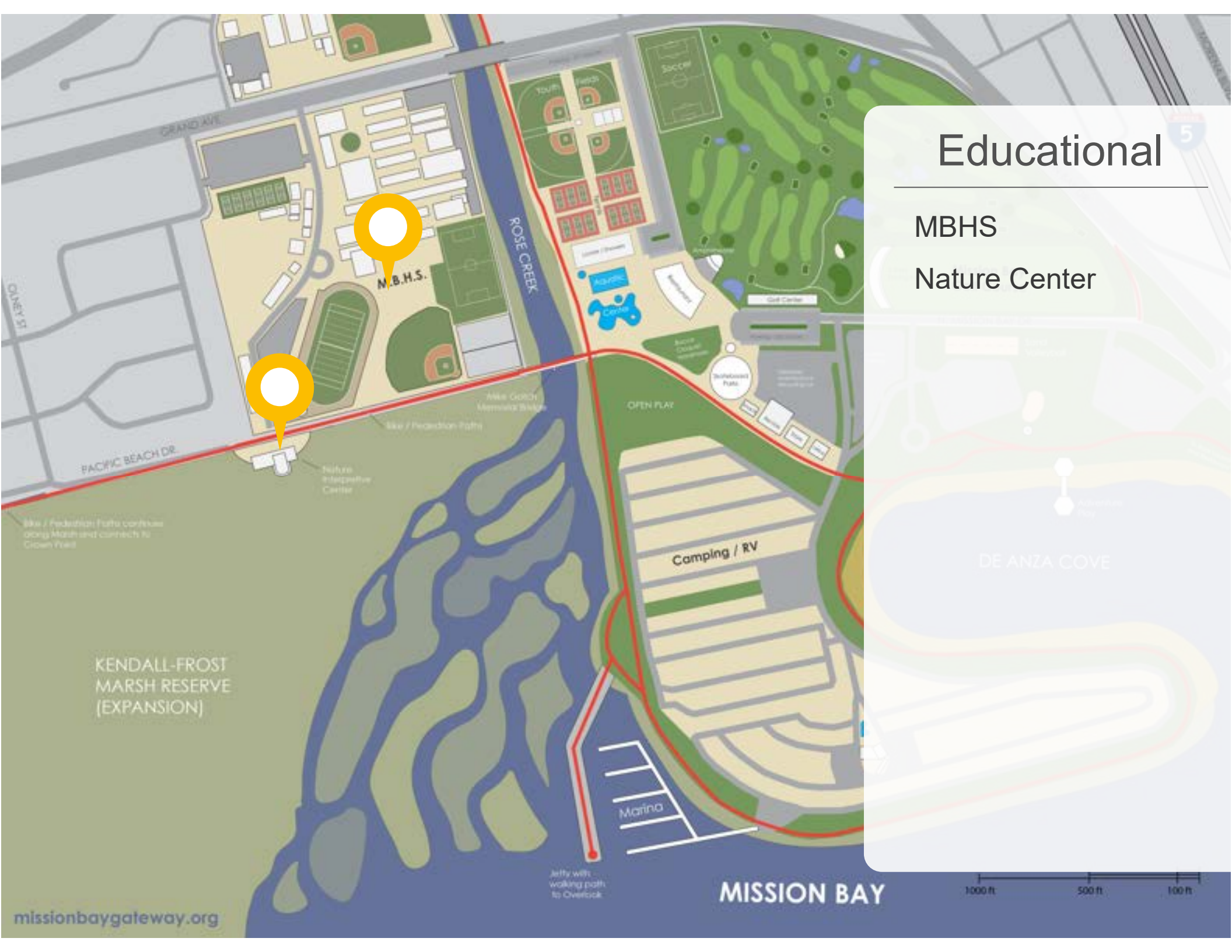
Improvements to Youth Fields

Improvements to Golf Course

Restaurant and Amphitheater

Skate Park

Rentals and Concessions



# Educational

MBHS

Nature Center

KENDALL-FROST MARSH RESERVE (EXPANSION)

MISSION BAY

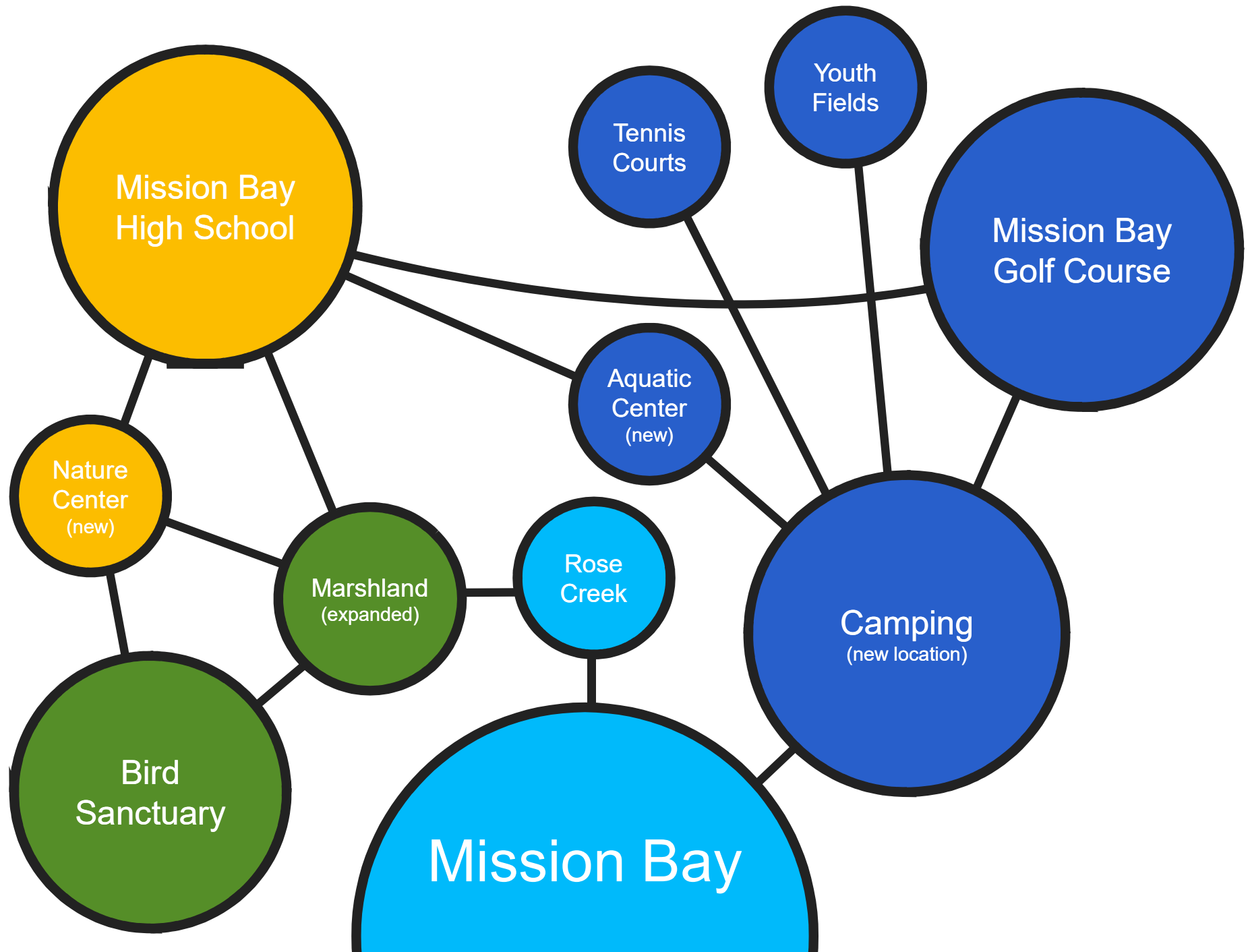
1000 ft 500 ft 100 ft

# Nature Interpretive Center <sup>NEW</sup>

*Connecting the community with our local environmental treasures*



# TOMORROW



# Project Funding

*Who will pay for all of this?*

1. The funding necessary to develop and enhance the new and existing recreational facilities
2. The funding necessary to create expanded marshlands and a recreated natural and healthy Rose Creek.





# Project Funding

*Who will pay for all of this?*



1. Likely that the cost of facilities can be totally offset with no need for additional public funds.
2. The funding necessary to create expanded marshlands and a recreated natural and healthy Rose Creek?

The cost of creating marshland that is site balanced is currently about \$450k per acre.

About 180 acres x \$450k = \$81ml.

If material must be moved offsite the cost and the environmental impact will skyrocket.

# Press



## Mission Bay Gateway Project has big vision - The Daily Transcript

By David L. Coddon,

Wednesday, August 28, 2013

An idea 10 years in the making may be gaining traction: a sweeping redesign of the parkland surrounding one of San Diego's most popular recreational destinations, Mission Bay.

The Mission Gateway Project is the brainchild of Scott Chipman, a Pacific Beach resident who is also a member of the P.B. Planning Group and the P.B. Town Council. In spite of the still-recovering economy and a sticky situation with residents of the De Anza Mobile Home Park whose leases expired in 2003, Chipman is rallying support for his vision of Mission Bay in and out of City Hall.

Chipman calls the joint-use Mission Bay Gateway Project "an opportunity in terms of treating this whole corner of Mission Bay as one environmental, recreational and educational facility." The land is state-owned, and the city of San Diego is its custodian.

It includes Rose Creek, the marshland around the bay and its adjoining bird sanctuary, Mission Bay High School, the De Anza and Campland On The Bay sites, and recreational facilities like ball fields, the P.B. Tennis Club and the Mission Bay Golf Course. Among other things, the Gateway project envisions a nature interpretive center, three new miles of biking

**POLITICS & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

**FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION**

### A better Mission Bay

Removing the De Anza Cove mobile home park could open the way for wetlands restoration, and recreational facilities for residents, students and campers.

**By Halley Persinger**

Scott Chipman does not consider himself a patient person. "Persistence" is more like it.

It's also the word he uses to describe the efforts he has made during the past three years to create and implement a plan to turn part of Mission Bay into an environmental, educational and recreational joint-use project.

Chipman needs persistence, given the history of Mission Bay and one of its quirkiest features: a mobile home park on De Anza Cove. The park's lease with the city ended years ago, but residents have

filed legal challenges that have allowed them to remain.

Chipman, a Pacific Beach resident who is on the neighborhood planning commission, wants to use that land for part of his Mission Bay Gateway Project. That plan would affect Mission Bay High School, Mission Bay Golf Course, Campland on the Bay (a privately run campground that leases the site from the city), Rose Creek and the Kendall-Frost Mission Bay Reserve.

The concept is to move Campland on the Bay from the west side of Rose Creek to De Anza Cove, on the east side.

Most of the land that makes up Campland

**22** Our City San Diego | Mar/Apr 2013

**23** Our City San Diego | Mar/Apr 2013





Youth Fields

Tennis Courts

MB Golf Course

Mission Bay High School

New Marsh

Wildlife Preserve

De Anza Cove Park

New Marsh

Crown Point Park

# Some Common Elements & Themes Between MBG and De Anza Natural (DAN)

- DAN – “envisions a balanced land use plan that serves the local and regional recreation needs ...while preserving natural resources.”
- “a variety of recreational uses as well as visitor accommodations”
- “recognize the history . . . of the . . . Kumeyaay people
- “provide waterfront trail, viewing areas and other passive recreational features” (without chain link and razor wire?)
- “a . . . pool, changing facilities/locker rooms”
- “surface parking and access drives”
- “food services/concessions”
- “access to the multi-use bike/path”

# Some Common Elements & Themes Between MBG and De Anza Natural (DAN) (Continued)

- DAN – “would include passive, open green area and program elements such as sand volleyball, ...adventure play . . .
- “a nature-based ranger station or other interpretive area.”
- “Three existing parking lots would provide access to the guest housing lease area, the open beach area and regional parkland areas.”

# Current Recreational Use/Hrs Per Year:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Hours</b>
<b>Golf</b>	<b>100,000 Rounds</b>	<b>800,000</b>
<b>Driving Range</b>	<b>400,000</b>	<b>400,000</b>
<b>Soccer – Spring</b>	<b>344 Players</b>	<b>4,128</b>
<b>Fall</b>	<b>688 Players</b>	<b>17,250</b>
<b>All-Star</b>		<b>1,000</b>
<b>Baseball – Boys</b>	<b>135 Players 48 weeks 5 hrs/wk</b>	<b>777,600</b>
<b>Softball - Girls</b>	<b>45 Players 48 weeks 5 hrs/wk</b>	<b>259,200</b>
<b>Tennis</b>	<b>70 hrs/6 courts 52 weeks</b>	<b>65,520</b>
<b>Pickle Ball</b>	<b>16 hrs/8 courts 52 weeks</b>	<b>26,624</b>
	<b>Total Hrs</b>	<b>2,351,322</b>

Approximately 2.5 million recreational hours in established venues. Maybe that many or more hours in casual use such as playgrounds, picnicking, walking, skating, jogging, impromptu lawn games such as volleyball, Frisbee, catch, etc. None of that use should be reduced.

With an increase of about 4,000 dwelling units we can expect this area of the Mission Bay Corridor to have an increase in population of about 10,000 people. The De Anza area of Mission Bay is going to be needed as their community recreation area.

## Land Use

The Specific Plan envisions a thriving, mixed-use urban environment that provides multiple opportunities for living and working near the Balboa Avenue Transit Station. The proposed land uses are depicted on the map below.



# Mission Bay Gateway (MBG) Guiding Principles for the Final project:

- The project should be a balance of recreational, educational, and environmental needs.
- The project should include and improve all appropriate existing uses. No use should be eliminated or dramatically reduced.
- The project should be beneficial to the community, regional and local visitors and the environment.
- The project should include new facilities currently missing in Mission Bay Park and the community.



## Guiding Principles (cont.)

- The project facilities should be public and joint use to benefit the most people and provide for the most use.
- The project should enhance and coordinate with the surrounding properties and uses that are adjacent or related to the area including, but not limited to: Rose Creek, Kendall/Frost wetlands, relationships to Mission Bay High School, pedestrian paths to nearby community areas and potential pedestrian/bike connections to the mid coast trolley system and stations.
- Utilize existing infrastructure to minimize construction costs and environmental impacts.

# Public Support



# Joe LaCava Community Forum

## 150 Residents Urge Protecting and Expanding Recreation



# Mission Bay Park Committee

## 450+ Citizens Urge Protecting and Expanding Recreation



# San Diego Park & Recreation Board Meeting

Attendees Urge Protecting and Expanding Recreation. Board Rejects City Plan



# How do you mitigate the loss of:

- Beach Access
- Park/Recreation Areas
- Water Recreation Acreage
- 125 slip Marina
- 50% Reduction in low cost waterfront accommodations



missionbaygateway.org



facebook.com/MissionBayGateway



[scott@chipman.info](mailto:scott@chipman.info)

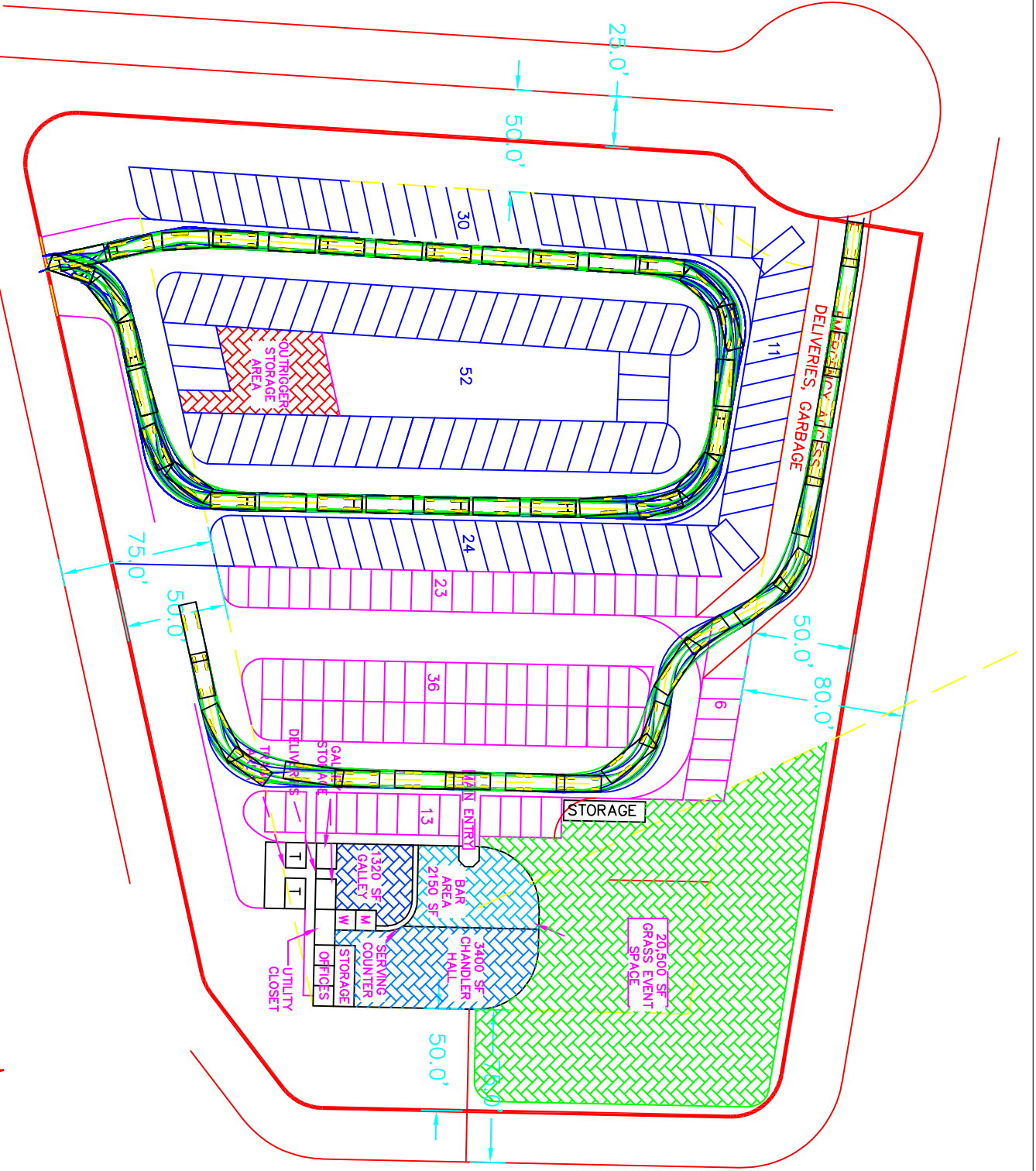
619 990 7480



PROPOSED PROPERTY:  
3.85+/- AC.  
78 NEW PARKING SPACES  
116 NEW BOAT PARKING SPACES







DELIVERIES, GARBAGE

20,500 SF  
GRASS EVENT  
SPACES

STORAGE

MAIN ENTRY  
BAR CHANDLER HALL  
BAR AREA  
GALLEY  
SERVING COUNTER  
STORAGE OF RIDES  
UTILITY CLOSET

OUTRIGGER  
STORAGE  
AREA

PROPOSED PROPERTY:  
3.85+/- AC.  
78 NEW PARKING SPACES  
116 NEW BOAT PARKING SPACES



Good Afternoon, I understand that you serve as Chairman of the San Diego Planning Commission, appointed by Councilman Joe LaCava. I represent the Pacific Beach Tennis Club, which is located within the De Anza Natural planning area in Mission Bay Park. I have been in close contact over the last four years with Park Planner Scott Sandel, as the De Anza plan has evolved over time, and I have appeared at multiple public hearings. Scott is out of town for most of September so I am hoping you might fill me in on where the plan now stands.

As you are no doubt aware, there has been a great deal of debate regarding how best to meet the goals of ReWild and the City pertaining to their concerns for sea level rise, and the increase of acreage for marshland and habitat, while also addressing the continuity of the multiple recreational groups in De Anza Cove. The most significant section in the plan, in its formulation presented to the Parks and Recreation Board at their last meeting this summer, was:

*The City will work with the recreation groups to plan for the future of the facilities with design and phased development in a manner that minimizes disruption to active recreation access. Buffer zones and other land uses proposed for the site of existing recreation facilities should be implemented after these facilities have been modified, moved, or replaced for continued use, unless imminent climate hazards necessitate more immediate mitigation.*

Our tennis club includes 500 tennis players along with several hundred additional pickleball players. The adjoining McEvoy Youth Fields provide baseball, softball, and soccer opportunities for over one thousand children and teens.

Am I correct that the Planning Commission will be hearing a presentation re De Anza at your **September 21st** meeting? Thus far I have not seen an Agenda for that meeting appear on the Commission website. Do you know if any significant changes to the plan have been made since the italicized language was adopted? Also, the latest site plan in the summer allocated **66 acres for Active Recreation**. I am hoping that at least this amount of acreage remains in any plan going forward through your Commission and the City Council.

I read on your website that you spent time in Cambridge adding to your urban planning skills. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to take many classes in urban planning as an undergraduate at Harvard and then in grad school at MIT. Your planning firm has undertaken multiple very impressive projects and I look forward to meeting you in the near future.

Best Wishes, Joanna Hirst

***Joanna Hirst, Board Member  
Masters of City Planning, MIT  
Pacific Beach Tennis Club***