

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

NORTH CENTRAL COAST DISTRICT
455 MARKET STREET, SUITE 228
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105
PHONE: (415) 904-5260
WEB: WWW.COASTAL.CA.GOV



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STAFF REPORT CDP APPLICATION

Application Number: 2-25-0424

Applicant: San Mateo County Harbor District

Project Location: Pillar Point Harbor, Princeton-by-the-Sea, San Mateo County.

Project Description: Replace an existing boat launch ramp and boarding floats; replace an existing public restroom near the boat launch, including an outdoor shower and fish cleaning station; install an infiltration basin to capture water from the outdoor shower and other runoff sources; replace existing benches and interpretive signage; and re-stripe and re-pave portions of the nearby parking lot and walkways.

Staff Recommendation: Approval with Conditions

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The San Mateo County Harbor District proposes to repair, replace, and improve public boat launch facilities at Pillar Point Harbor, primarily to extend the longevity of these facilities and address ADA accessibility. The boat launching facility is the only public boat launch ramp providing direct access to the ocean between San Francisco and Santa Cruz and is accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, year-round. The existing six-lane launch ramp, restroom, boat rinse and fish cleaning facilities were constructed between 1989 and 1991, and the ramp and boarding float were last repaired/replaced in the early 2000's. The existing facilities are deteriorating and approaching the end of their useful life. The proposed project would replace the boat launch ramp, boarding floats, restroom, fish cleaning station, benches and interpretive signage to improve public recreational access; restripe and repave parking areas and walkways to improve accessibility; and install a new infiltration basin to capture boat rinse runoff to improve water quality.

Absent the proposed project, the Pillar Point Harbor boat launching facilities, which are nearing the end of their functional life span, would continue to deteriorate, and the existing limitations to ADA accessibility would remain. This project represents an opportunity to upgrade the boat launching facilities in a way that better serves the Coastal Act's goals of protecting coastal-dependent uses and enhancing and maximizing public recreational access – including boating access – within Pillar Point Harbor and along the shoreline. Potential minor coastal resource impacts from the project are effectively addressed via project components and required conditions of approval (e.g., over-water BMPs, debris removal, wildlife protections, etc.),

In sum, the proposed improvements to the Pillar Point Harbor boat launch ramp and associated facilities would help to better support coastal-dependent uses such as recreational boating, as well as provide for more inclusive public access. For these reasons, staff recommends approval as conditioned, and the motion and resolution to effectuate this recommendation are found on **page 4** below.

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1. MOTION AND RESOLUTION

Staff recommends that the Commission, after public hearing, **approve** a CDP with conditions for the proposed development. To implement this recommendation, staff recommends a **YES** vote on the following motion. Passage of this motion will result in approval of the CDP as conditioned and adoption of the following resolution and findings. The motion passes only by affirmative vote of a majority of the Commissioners present.

Motion: *I move that the Commission **approve** Coastal Development Permit Number 2-25-0424 pursuant to the staff recommendation, and I recommend a **yes** vote.*

Resolution to Approve CDP: *The Commission hereby approves Coastal Development Permit Number 2-25-0424 and adopts the findings set forth below on grounds that the development as conditioned will be in conformity with the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act. Approval of the permit complies with the California Environmental Quality Act because either 1) feasible mitigation measures and/or alternatives have been incorporated to substantially lessen any significant adverse effects of the development on the environment, or 2) there are no further feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would substantially lessen any significant adverse impacts of the development on the environment.*

2. STANDARD CONDITIONS

This permit is granted subject to the following standard conditions:

- 1. Notice of Receipt and Acknowledgment.** The permit is not valid, and development shall not commence until a copy of the permit, signed by the Permittee or authorized agent, acknowledging receipt of the permit and acceptance of the terms and conditions, is returned to the Commission office.
- 2. Expiration.** If development has not commenced, the permit will expire two years from the date on which the Commission voted on the application. Development shall be pursued in a diligent manner and completed in a reasonable period of time. Application for extension of the permit must be made prior to the expiration date.
- 3. Interpretation.** Any questions of intent or interpretation of any condition will be resolved by the Executive Director or the Commission.
- 4. Assignment.** The permit may be assigned to any qualified person, provided assignee files with the Commission an affidavit accepting all terms and conditions of the permit.
- 5. Terms and Conditions Run with the Land.** These terms and conditions shall be perpetual, and it is the intention of the Commission and the Permittee to bind all future owners and possessors of the subject property to the terms and conditions.

3. SPECIAL CONDITIONS

This permit is granted subject to the following special conditions:

1. **Approved Project.** This CDP authorizes the replacement of the existing Pillar Point Harbor public boat launch ramp and boarding floats; the replacement of the existing restroom and fish cleaning station; the installation of a new shower; the installation of a new retaining basin and trench drain; the replacement of existing benches and interpretive signage; and the repaving and restriping of parking areas and walkways, all substantially consistent with the proposed plans (titled "Launch Ramp Boat Rinse Station, & ADA Restroom Pillar Point Harbor", dated April 25, 2025, and dated received in the Commission's North Central Coast District Office on May 29, 2025; see **Exhibit 2**) subject to the terms and conditions of this CDP.
2. **Construction Plan.** PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE CDP, the Permittee shall submit two copies of a Construction Plan to the Executive Director for review and written approval. The Construction Plan shall, at a minimum, include and provide for the following:
 - a. **Construction Areas.** The Construction Plan shall identify the specific location of all construction areas, all staging areas, and all construction access corridors in site plan view. All areas within which construction activities and/or staging areas are to take place shall be minimized in size to the maximum extent feasible in order to have the least impact on public access and other coastal resources, including by using, as feasible, inland areas for staging and storing construction equipment and materials. Construction areas shall be sited and designed to minimize impacts to public beach and shore access and public views at Pillar Point Harbor, including but not limited to public views across the site and out to the water. Construction (including but not limited to construction activities, and materials and/or equipment storage) shall be prohibited outside of the defined construction, staging, and storage areas.
 - b. **Construction Methods.** The Construction Plan shall specify the construction methods to be used, including all methods to be used to keep the construction areas separate from public recreational use areas as much as possible (including using unobtrusive temporary fencing or equivalent measures to delineate construction areas), and including verification that equipment operation and equipment and material storage will not, to the maximum extent feasible, significantly degrade public access and public views during construction. The Plan shall limit construction activities to avoid coastal resource impacts as much as feasible, and lighting of the work area is prohibited.
 - c. **Construction Timing.** Construction is prohibited during weekends, from the Saturday of Memorial Day through Labor Day inclusive, during non-daytime hours (i.e., from one-hour after sunset to one-hour before sunrise), and lighting of tidelands and water areas is prohibited unless due to extenuating circumstances the Executive Director authorizes such work and all possible measures are

applied to ensure maximum coastal resource protection.

- d. Construction BMPs.** The Construction Plan shall identify the type and location of all erosion control and water quality best management practices that will be implemented during construction to protect coastal water quality, including at a minimum all of the following:
- 1. Runoff Protection.** Silt fences, straw wattles, or equivalent apparatus shall be installed at the perimeter of all construction areas to prevent construction-related runoff and sediment from discharging from the construction area or entering into storm drains or otherwise offsite or towards the beach and ocean. Similar apparatus shall be applied on the beach and pier areas for the same purpose when potential runoff is anticipated. Special attention shall be given to appropriate filtering and treating of all runoff, and all drainage points, including storm drains, shall be equipped with appropriate construction-related containment, filtration, and treatment equipment.
 - 2. Water Quality Protection.** For water side construction areas, turbidity curtains shall be used to contain sediment where coastal resources, such as benthic communities or eelgrass, may be at risk. Nets to catch debris/materials and floating booms to contain debris/materials that otherwise finds its way into coastal waters shall be used, and any debris/materials collected shall be removed as soon as possible but no later than the end of each day. All erosion and sediment controls shall be in place prior to the commencement of construction as well as at the end of each workday.
 - 3. Equipment BMPs.** Equipment washing, refueling, and servicing shall take place at an appropriate off-site and inland location to help prevent leaks and spills of hazardous materials at the project site, at least 50 feet inland from the pier and preferably on an existing hard surface area (e.g., a road) or an area where collection of materials is facilitated. These activities shall not take place on the tidelands or over-water structures to eliminate the possibility that pollutants may enter coastal waters. Bulkhead and over-water construction projects that will use heavy equipment for more than 30 days, shall use biodegradable hydraulic fluid and biodiesel as an alternative to petroleum products. All construction equipment shall also be inspected and maintained at a similarly sited inland location to prevent leaks and spills of hazardous materials at the project site.
 - 4. Good Housekeeping BMPs.** The construction site shall maintain good construction housekeeping controls and procedures at all times (e.g., clean up all leaks, drips, and other spills immediately; keep materials covered and out of the rain, including covering exposed piles of soil and wastes; dispose of all wastes properly, place trash receptacles on site for that purpose, and cover open trash receptacles during wet weather; remove all construction debris from the site; etc.).

- 5. Rubber-tired Construction Vehicles.** Only rubber-tired construction vehicles are allowed on the beach, except track vehicles may be used if the Executive Director determines that they are required to safely carry out construction and all possible measures are applied to ensure maximum coastal resource protection. When transiting on the beach, all vehicles shall remain as far away from the ocean as possible and avoid contact with ocean waters.
 - 6. Construction Material Storage.** All construction materials and equipment placed on the beach during daylight construction hours shall be stored beyond the reach of tidal waters. All construction materials and equipment shall be removed in their entirety from these areas by one-hour after sunset each day that work occurs, except for necessary erosion and sediment controls and construction area boundary fencing where such controls and fencing are placed as far inland as possible and are minimized in their extent. All construction materials shall be properly stored and contained so that these products will not spill or otherwise enter the coastal environment.
- e. In-water and Over-water Structure Work.** The following best management practices for in-water and over-water structure work shall be employed:
- 1. Treated Wood.** If treated wood is sanded or sawcut during demolition, installation, or maintenance, all sawdust and debris generated shall be contained, removed, and properly disposed of. All treated wood removed and all treated wood debris/fines shall be stored a minimum of 50 feet from coastal waters, drainage courses, and storm drain inlets on impervious pavement or an impervious tarp that is covered during rain events, and shall be promptly disposed of at an appropriate inland location, where a coastal zone disposal location shall require Executive Director review and approval.
 - 2. Concrete In-water Work.** Concrete in-water work shall be accomplished via a method that avoids contact with harbor waters (e.g., dewatering the work area, containment caissons, etc.), and concrete shall be sufficiently cured to prevent any significant increase in the pH of adjacent waters before contact is allowed. If required to properly construct in-water concrete elements, the tremie method (i.e., using forms to receive wet concrete under water by inserting a plastic pipe down to the bottom of the form and pumping concrete into the form so that water is pushed towards the top of the form) may be used. If so, any waters discharged from the forms in such operations shall be pumped off, collected in a holding tank, and tested for pH. If the pH is greater than 8.5, the water shall be neutralized with sulfuric acid until pH is between 8.5 and 6.5, when it can be returned to the harbor. Solids that settle out during the pH balancing process shall not be discharged to the marine environment and must be appropriately disposed of offsite.
 - 3. Coatings and Sealants.** Coatings and sealants shall be composed of products that are inert after they have cured and dried. Fusion Bonded Epoxy, HDPE, and polyurea products are preferred. Coal tar-based sealants shall only be allowed if they are coated or wrapped with an inert product to

- completely isolate them from the marine environment. Installation and application of epoxy, resin, or cementitious grout/fill on-site shall only be conducted when predicted weather and ocean conditions allow effective control and full containment and allow such materials to remain dry until cured. All pressure-injection and gravity-feed applications of epoxy, resin, or cementitious materials shall be closely monitored visually to ensure that these materials do not leak or spill into coastal waters during application. Coatings and waterproofing sealants used in the field shall be carefully applied by brush or roller to limit application to the immediate surfaces intended for protection, and to prevent drips or spills into coastal waters. All anti-corrosion coatings, epoxy fillers, and waterproofing sealants shall be properly stored and contained so that these products will not leak or spill, or otherwise enter the coastal environment.
4. **Surface Prep.** All cleaning and preparation of surfaces shall use wet vacuum techniques, containment booms, and heavy mesh containment netting so that any debris, chips, dust, dirt, and fine particles are collected and disposed of in a location where they will not enter coastal waters. Dip nets shall be on-site and used to retrieve debris that accidentally falls into the water.
 5. **Spill Prevention.** Methods to contain any leaks or spills of materials during application shall be planned in advance, and any necessary equipment or supplies shall be readily accessible onsite. Any leaks or spills of anti-corrosion coatings, epoxy fillers, and waterproofing sealants shall be immediately cleaned up.
 6. **Silt Curtain.** A silt curtain, enclosing any in-water work areas, shall be used during all in-water work. Substitute measures to minimize turbidity shall require Executive Director approval.
 7. **Debris Removal.** All debris in harbor waters and along the harbor bottom that is encountered during demolition and construction activities shall be removed, documented, and properly disposed of per Special Condition 4.
- g. **Property Owner/Easement Holder Consent.** For any construction activities that may occur on properties (and/or on easements or similar legally defined areas) not owned by the Permittee, including but not limited to construction that requires equipment access on and/or across such other properties, the Permittee shall provide evidence of review, approval and consent from such property owners allowing such activities, where such consent shall only be deemed to have been given if the consent is for development consistent with the terms and conditions of the CDP, including as it affects such properties.
 - h. **Restoration.** All construction debris shall be removed, and all beach area and other public recreational access and use areas and all beach access points impacted by construction activities shall be restored to their pre-construction condition or better within three days of completion of construction. Any native materials impacted shall be appropriately filtered as necessary to remove all

construction debris.

- i. **Construction Site Documents.** The Construction Plan shall provide that copies of the signed CDP and the approved Construction Plan be maintained in a conspicuous location at the construction job site at all times, and that such copies are available for public review on request. All persons involved with the construction shall be briefed on the content and meaning of the CDP and the approved Construction Plan, as well as the public review requirements applicable to them, prior to commencement of construction.
- j. **Construction Coordinator.** The Construction Plan shall provide that a construction coordinator be designated to be contacted during construction should questions arise regarding the construction (in case of both regular inquiries and emergencies), and that the construction coordinator's contact information (i.e., address, phone numbers, email, etc.), including, at a minimum, an email address and a telephone number that will be made available 24 hours a day for the duration of construction, is conspicuously posted at the job site where such contact information is readily visible from public viewing areas while still protecting public views as much as possible, along with indication that the construction coordinator should be contacted in the case of questions regarding the construction (in case of both regular inquiries and emergencies). The construction coordinator shall record the name and contact information (i.e., address, email, phone number, etc.) and nature of all complaints received regarding the construction, and shall investigate complaints and take remedial action, if necessary, within 24 hours of receipt of the complaint or inquiry. All complaints and all actions taken in response shall be summarized and provided to the Executive Director on at least a weekly basis.
- k. **Construction Specifications.** All construction specifications and materials shall include appropriate provisions that require remediation for any work done inconsistent with the terms and conditions of this CDP.
- l. **Notification.** The Permittee shall notify planning staff of the Coastal Commission's North Central Coast District Office at least three working days in advance of commencement of construction, and immediately upon completion of construction.

All requirements above and all requirements of the approved Construction Plan shall be enforceable components of this CDP. The Permittee shall undertake development in accordance with this condition and the approved Construction Plan.

3. Biological Resource Protections.

- a. **Nesting Bird Surveys.** For any construction work that would occur during the avian breeding season (i.e., February 1 to September 15) and exceed 65 dB at potential nesting sites, pre-construction surveys shall be completed by a qualified wildlife biologist with experience in observing reproductive and nesting behavior

to identify displays of nesting behavior and/or active nests (i.e., as occupied by eggs or nestlings) in the proposed construction areas. The following shall apply:

1. Surveys shall commence no sooner than 72 hours prior to the start of construction and shall occur weekly thereafter over the project season.
 2. Surveys shall extend 300 feet from the project work area to locate any active non-raptor nests, and 500 feet to locate any active raptor (bird of prey) nests.
 3. If active nests are located, clearly marked no-disturbance buffers of 300 feet shall be established for non-raptor species and 500 feet for raptors, unless evidence is provided to demonstrate to the Executive Director's satisfaction that a different distance is appropriate. A qualified biologist shall determine when a nest has fully fledged or is no longer in use, at which point its no-disturbance buffer can be removed.
 4. Maps identifying the location of any active nests detected shall be provided, and at a minimum, indicate the date of survey, nest stage (e.g., eggs, nestlings, etc.), and the buffers.
- b. **Nesting Disturbance.** If under any circumstances either construction staff or the biologist observe signs of nesting bird distress (e.g., parents flush from the nest and do not readily return as activities continue, anxious warning calls, etc.), work shall be stopped immediately, and the biologist shall consult with the Executive Director to determine necessary modifications to activities. Activities will resume only after the biologist is satisfied that the modifications are sufficient to avoid continued disturbance to the nests.
- c. **Monitoring.** A monitoring report shall be provided to the Executive Director within 90 days of construction completion and shall include: all survey results and associated maps; along with a brief narrative describing the survey methods and observations of the species' tolerances to noise, vibration, and visual disturbance cues. If any incidents have resulted in a need for further consultation with the project biologist and/or the Executive Director, these will also be noted and discussed.
- d. **Worker Training.** Prior to commencement of construction (including staging and mobilization), all personnel associated with project construction should attend a Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) training, conducted by a qualified biologist, to aid workers in recognizing special-status terrestrial and marine species, native birds, and other biological resources that may occur in the project area. The specifics of this program should include identification and habitats of special-status species with potential to occur at the project area, a description of the regulatory status and general ecological characteristics of sensitive resources, and review of the limits of construction and mitigation measures required to reduce impacts to biological resources within the work area. A fact sheet conveying this information should also be prepared for distribution to all contractors, their employers, and other personnel involved with

construction. All employees should sign a form provided by the trainer indicating they have attended the WEAP and understand the information presented to them. A WEAP training recorded by a qualified biologist specifically for the project may be used if in-person trainings are restricted due to health concerns (e.g., COVID-19) and/or if the construction schedule makes it infeasible for a biologist to train each new crew member in person.

- e. Eelgrass Protection.** Prior to commencement of work on the boat launch ramp, or any other necessary in-water work, a qualified biologist shall inspect the soft bottom area to be covered by the new boat launch ramp to confirm the presence or absence of eelgrass during the season of active growth. Should eelgrass be identified outside of "Dredge Area 1" as defined by Exhibit 2, Figure 2, of the Surfers Beach Sand Restoration Project (CDP 2-22-0726), any project impacts to such eelgrass shall be mitigated 1.2:1 and the Permittee shall submit a mitigation plan for approval by the Executive Director. If eelgrass is not present, areas permanently covered by the boat ramp extension will still be subject to mitigation for benthic impacts (see also Special Condition 4).
- c. Marine Mammal Protections.** The Permittee shall establish an exclusion zone for marine mammals during in-water construction activities. Visual monitoring of the exclusion zone shall commence at least 30 minutes prior to the beginning of in-water construction activities each day and after each break of more than 30 minutes. All work shall stop if a marine mammal enters the zone and not restart until the animal has left the exclusion zone for 15 minutes.
- 4. Benthic Habitat Mitigation.** Prior to project completion, the Permittee shall ensure the removal of debris from harbor waters and along the harbor bottom equivalent to the area of permanent benthic (i.e., soft bottom) impacts as a result of the project (approximately 660 square feet, subject to a post-construction verification survey) at a mitigation ratio of 1.2:1. Any debris that is removed shall be quantified and recorded for submittal to the Executive Director, before being properly disposed of. Should the Permittee be unable to remove a sufficient quantity of debris to meet this requirement, the Permittee shall submit a plan that identifies additional actions to fulfill the mitigation area requirements for project impacts. This plan shall be reviewed and approved by the Executive Director.
- 5. Protection of Archaeological and/or Tribal Cultural Resources.** The Permittee shall undertake the approved project in compliance with the following measures to protect archaeological and/or tribal cultural resources to the maximum extent feasible.

 - a. Monitoring.** A qualified, locally experienced archaeologist and a tribal monitor, if requested and approved by relevant tribe(s), shall be on site to monitor all activities with the potential to impact archaeological and/or tribal cultural resources, including all ground disturbing activities. The monitor(s) shall have experience monitoring for archaeological resources of the local area during excavation project, be competent to identify significant resource types, and be aware of recommended tribal

procedures for the inadvertent discovery of tribal cultural and/or archaeological resources and/or human remains.

- b. Discovery Protocol.** If any tribal cultural deposits are discovered during the course of the project, all construction within 200 feet of such deposits shall cease and shall not re-commence until a qualified cultural resource specialist (which could be a person identified in subpart (a) above), in consultation with the relevant tribe(s), analyzes the significance of the find and, if deemed significant, prepares a supplementary archaeological plan for the review and approval of the Executive Director that evaluates and provides suggested measures related to the discovery. The Executive Director shall review the plan and either: (1) approve it and determine that its recommended changes to the project or mitigation measures do not necessitate an amendment to this CDP, or (2) determine that the changes proposed therein necessitate a CDP amendment. The location of any and all identified archaeological and tribal cultural resources shall be kept confidential, and only those entities that are legally required to be informed shall be informed of their locations.
 - c. Human Remains.** Should human remains be discovered on-site during the course of the project, immediately after such discovery, the on-site archaeologist and/or tribal monitor shall notify the County Coroner within 24 hours of such discovery, and all construction activities shall be temporarily halted until the remains can be identified. If the Coroner determines that the human remains are those of a Native American, the Coroner shall contact the NAHC within 24 hours, pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5. The NAHC shall deem the Native American most likely descendant (MLD) to be invited to participate in the identification process pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The Permittee shall comply with the requirements of Section 5097.98 and work with the MLD person(s) to discuss and confer with the descendants all reasonable options regarding the descendants' preference for treatment. Within 5 calendar days of notification to NAHC, the Permittee shall notify the Coastal Commission's Executive Director shall maintain confidentiality regarding the presence of human remains on the project site.
- 6. Future Maintenance.** This CDP authorizes future maintenance as described in this special condition. The Permittee acknowledges and agrees on behalf of itself and all successors and assigns that it is the Permittee's responsibility to maintain the approved project and all related development in a structurally sound manner, and in their approved and required states. "Maintenance," as it is understood in this condition, means development that would otherwise require a CDP whose purpose is to repair and/or maintain the overall permitted structure, with limitations as follows: minor concrete and asphalt repairs; repair or replacement of boarding floats; utility repairs; pile repairs (such as coating or sleeving); scour rock repair, not to exceed the approved footprint; minor repairs to permitted buildings and structures; maintenance of the infiltration basin, including vegetation maintenance and debris

removal. Such maintenance is authorized by this CDP for five years from the date of Commission approval (i.e., until November 7, 2030), where the term may be extended past that time in up to five-year increments subject to Executive Director review and written approval to verify that there are not changed circumstances, understandings, or other issues associated with such allowance for maintenance events that necessitate re-review. It is the Permittee's responsibility to request Executive Director approval prior to the end of each 5-year maintenance period, and maintenance can only be carried out beyond November 7, 2030 (and beyond subsequent five-year periods) pursuant to these maintenance provisions if (1) the Permittee requests an extension prior to the end of each 5-year maintenance period; and (2) the Executive Director extends the maintenance term in writing.

- 7. As-Built Plans.** WITHIN THREE MONTHS OF COMPLETION OF CONSTRUCTION, the Permittee shall submit two copies of As-Built Plans to the Executive Director for review and written approval showing all elements the approved project. The As-Built Plans shall be substantially consistent with the approved project identified in Special Condition 1. The As-Built Plans shall include color photographs (in both color hard copy 8½ x 11 and digital jpg formats) that clearly show the as-built project and that are accompanied by a site plan that notes the location of each photographic viewpoint and the date and time of each photograph. At a minimum, the photographs shall be from upcoast, seaward, inland, and downcoast viewpoints, and from any other viewpoints necessary to provide complete photographic coverage of all project areas. Such photographs shall be at a scale that allows comparisons to be made with the naked eye between photographs taken in different years and from the same vantage points. The As-Built Plans shall include vertical and horizontal references to inland surveyed benchmarks for use in future monitoring efforts. The As-Built Plans shall be submitted with certification by a licensed civil engineer with experience in coastal structures and processes, acceptable to the Executive Director, verifying that the project has been constructed in conformance with the approved project identified in Special Condition 1 and the terms and conditions of this CDP.
- 8. Other Authorizations.** PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION, the Permittee shall provide to the Executive Director written documentation of authorizations from all entities from which such authorization is necessary for the approved project (including at a minimum from the California State Lands Commission, the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Mateo County, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) or evidence that no such authorizations are required from each of these entities. The Permittee shall inform the Executive Director of any changes to the project required by any other such authorizations. Any such changes shall not be incorporated into the project until the Permittee obtains a Commission amendment to this CDP, unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment is legally required.
- 9. Future Permitting.** None of the CDP exemptions that might be provided by Coastal Act Section 30610 (and/or related implementing regulations) shall apply to the approved development, and any and all future proposed development related to this project, this project area, and/or these CDPs shall require new CDPs or CDP

amendments that are processed through the Coastal Commission, unless the Executive Director determines that such CDPs or CDP amendments are not legally required.

10. Minor Adjustments. Minor adjustments to these special condition requirements which do not require a CDP amendment or new CDP (as determined by the Executive Director) may be allowed by the Executive Director if such adjustments: (1) are deemed reasonable and necessary; and (2) do not adversely impact coastal resources.

11. Assumption of Risk, Waiver of Liability, and Indemnity. By acceptance of this CDP, the Permittee acknowledges and agrees, on behalf of itself and all successors and assigns: (a) that the project area is subject to coastal hazards, including but not limited to episodic and long-term shoreline retreat and coastal erosion, high seas, ocean waves, tidal scour, storms, tsunamis, coastal flooding, landslide, earth movement, and the interaction of all of these, many of which will worsen with future sea level rise; (b) to assume the risks to the Permittee and the properties that are the subject of this CDP of injury and damage from such hazards in connection with this permitted development; (c) to unconditionally waive any claim of damage or liability against the Commission, its officers, agents, and employees for injury or damage from such hazards; (d) to indemnify and hold harmless the Commission, its officers, agents, and employees with respect to the Commission's approval of the CDP against any and all liability, claims, demands, damages, costs (including costs and fees incurred in defense of such claims), expenses, and amounts paid in settlement arising from any injury or damage due to such hazards; and (e) that any adverse effects to people or property caused by the permitted project shall be fully the responsibility of the Permittee.

12. Liability for Costs and Attorneys' Fees. The Permittee shall reimburse the Coastal Commission in full for all Coastal Commission costs and attorneys' fees (including but not limited to such costs/fees that are: (1) charged by the Office of the Attorney General; and/or (2) required by a court) that the Coastal Commission incurs in connection with the defense of any action brought by a party other than the Permittee against the Coastal Commission, its officers, employees, agents, successors and/or assigns challenging the approval or issuance of this CDP, the interpretation and/or enforcement of CDP terms and conditions, or any other matter related to this CDP. The Permittee shall reimburse the Coastal Commission within 60 days of being informed by the Executive Director of the amount of such costs/fees. The Coastal Commission retains complete authority to conduct and direct the defense of any such action against the Coastal Commission, its officers, employees, agents, successors and/or assigns. By acceptance of this CDP and its terms and conditions, the Permittee irrevocably agree to this obligation, which shall be continuing in nature and remain in full force and effect regardless of whether this CDP approval is invalidated as the result of the litigation contemplated by this condition or otherwise changed in any way.

4. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS

A. Project Location, Background, and Description

1. Project Location

The proposed project is located within Pillar Point Harbor which is located in the unincorporated community of Princeton-by-the-Sea in San Mateo County, approximately five miles north of downtown Half Moon Bay. Pillar Point Harbor is a working harbor protected by outer and inner breakwaters and accommodates both commercial and recreational boating and fishing uses, as well as general public access. The boat launch area is located in the outer harbor, between the inner breakwater and outer breakwater. The boat launch parking area is located slightly inland and to the north of the boat launch facility. See location map in **Exhibit 1**.

2. Project Background and Description

Along with being a working harbor that houses commercial fishing industry uses, Pillar Point Harbor offers the public a variety of recreational activities including boating, kayaking, fishing, and observing nature and wildlife views. The boat launching facility is the only public boat launch ramp providing direct access to the ocean between San Francisco and Santa Cruz and is accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, year-round, and thus provides crucial public access and recreation opportunities for this stretch of the coast.¹ The boat launch ramp was originally constructed as a two-lane launch ramp in 1968 before it was relocated and replaced with the existing six-lane launch ramp between 1989 and 1991, at which time the restroom, boat rinse and fish cleaning facilities were also constructed. The ramp and boarding float were last replaced in the early 2000's, and the existing facilities are now approaching the end of their useful life some 25 years later. The proposed project is intended to replace the aging public boat launch ramp facilities and improve ADA accessibility.

The replacement of the boat launch ramp would involve the placement of a new concrete ramp directly on top of the existing ramp, with pre-cast concrete placed for the lower portion of the ramp, and cast-in-place concrete placed on the upper portion of the ramp. This concrete overlay will result in a slight increase in the height of the ramp, thus decreasing water depth above the ramp. To account for this decrease in water depth, and to meet Division of Boating and Waterways (DBW) water depth guidelines, the ramp will be extended approximately 5 feet further into the water. The scour protection rock at the bottom of the existing launch ramp will remain, and gravel will be placed to fill the voids in the rock to provide a suitable foundation for the precast concrete panel that will be installed at the ramp bottom, where additional rock will be placed to provide scour protection. Much of the scour rock will be placed within the footprint of the existing scour, with approximately 600 square feet of new rock added to extend beyond the existing scour rock footprint. The four existing concrete abutments at the top of the ramp will be replaced with new concrete abutments of similar dimensions but located further

¹ Effective July 1, 2025, the fee for use of the launch ramp is \$20 per launch, in and out. An annual permit is available for a fee of \$269 and provides access to all launch ramps operated by the San Mateo County Harbor District. Senior vessel owners aged 65 or older and persons with disabilities are eligible for a 20% discount on annual permits.

landward. The four existing timber boarding floats will be replaced with new aluminum-framed boarding floats with decking composed of either grated fiberglass reinforced decking (FRP) ("mini-mesh" or "micro-mesh"), aluminum grating, or composite lumber decking. The replacement boarding floats will be approximately the same size as the existing floats and will not result in an increase in overwater coverage. The existing 16-inch concrete piles will remain in place and will be blast-cleaned and coated with an underwater epoxy seal to extend the service life of the piles.

In addition, the existing nearby public restroom has reached the end of its useful life and does not meet ADA accessibility requirements. The existing restroom will be replaced with a new prefabricated concrete, ADA-compliant public restroom with four unisex stalls. The pavement around the restroom will be removed and replaced as needed to meet accessibility requirements, and utilities will be replaced as needed as well. An outdoor shower is planned for installation adjacent to the restroom. Additionally, existing benches and interpretive signage would be replaced, and a new bike rack would be installed near the restroom area.

Currently, runoff from the boat rinse area drains directly onto existing paved areas. If flows are great enough, the water travels downgrade to a trench drain along the shoreward edge of the launch ramp area where it is then conveyed to a concrete separator unit along the shoreline top of bank, then discharged directly into the Harbor. The Applicant proposes to install a new 8-foot wide, 102-foot-long infiltration basin to better capture water from the boat rinse area, the new outdoor shower, and stormwater runoff. The existing trench drain has also reached the end of its useful life and will be replaced with a new trench drain of a similar size.

Finally, the project would create 5 new ADA accessible parking spaces. Specifically, 6 existing standard trailer spaces would be converted to 4 accessible trailer spaces in lot C2, one standard vehicle space would be added in lot C2, two new standard trailer spaces would be added to lot C3, and a new accessible trailer space would be added at the launch ramp area. The creation of ADA parking spaces requires removal and repaving of approximately 17,400 square feet of asphalt and restriping. In addition, approximately 1,000 square feet of concrete sidewalk/curb will be replaced. An accessible path of travel from the ADA parking stalls to the restroom, fish cleaning station, and the top of the boat launch ramp (easternmost dock) will be provided; and a crosswalk along the top of the launch ramp will delineate an accessible route to the westernmost dock. Approximately 7,000 square feet of existing damaged concrete roadway will be ground down and a new asphalt overlay will be placed. In addition, sidewalks will be removed and replaced as necessary to connect to the new launch ramp and for accessible site access around the new restroom.

See **Exhibit 2** for proposed project plans.

B. Standard of Review

The proposed project is in areas seaward of the mean high tide line and within the Commission's retained CDP jurisdiction, as well as areas within Pillar Point Harbor and within San Mateo County's CDP jurisdiction. The San Mateo County Harbor District, the County and the Executive Director all agreed to a consolidated CDP review for the

project, as allowed by Coastal Act Section 30601.3. Therefore, the standard of review for the proposed development is the Coastal Act with the San Mateo County certified LCP providing non-binding guidance.

C. CDP Determination

Applicable Coastal Act Provisions

The Coastal Act requires that facilities that provide for commercial and recreational fishing be protected and updated, if feasible, and it encourages the provision and protection of public access and water-oriented recreational activities. Additionally, the Coastal Act requires the protection of marine resources and related habitats as well as the minimization of coastal hazard risks. These Coastal Act provisions also limit fill activities to seven enumerated uses, and only in instances where there is no feasible less environmentally damaging alternative, and where feasible mitigation measures have been provided to minimize adverse environmental effects. See applicable Coastal Act provisions in **Exhibit 3**.

Consistency Analysis

Public Access and Recreation

Recreational boating is a coastal-dependent use and an enumerated Coastal Act priority use that cannot function without sufficient facilities. The public boat launching facility at Pillar Point Harbor is the only public boat launch providing direct access to the ocean between San Francisco and Santa Cruz and is in active use throughout the year. Therefore, the proposed replacement and improvements to the public boat launch ramp and nearby amenities will assure the continued presence and operation of a high priority, coastal-dependent public access and recreational use which the Coastal Act not only protects but encourages. The Coastal Act requires that development provide maximum access and recreational opportunities to the public, consistent with public safety needs and the protection of natural resources.

The project as proposed would replace aging boating and public recreation facilities at the boat launch area, including the boat launch ramp and boarding floats, public restrooms, fish cleaning station, boat rinse area, and benches and interpretive signage. The project would also convert some existing trailer parking into ADA trailer parking, add additional ADA and standard trailer parking spots, and repave and restripe other general public parking areas, leading to a net increase in parking spaces and better functionality of the public parking areas. As structured, the project assures that the public recreational use that occurs at the boat launch would continue to be accommodated, including during peak fishing/recreation seasons, with minimal disruption. Once completed, the project would also extend the lifespan of the boat launch ramp and associated facilities (restroom, fish cleaning station, parking areas, etc.), assuring these high priority uses are protected, upgraded, and encouraged as required by the Coastal Act. Therefore, the proposed project is consistent with the Coastal Act as it protects and upgrades facilities serving recreational boaters and general public access.

Even so, the proposed project construction has the potential to temporarily impact coastal access in the project area during its implementation. The proposed project is

anticipated to take 4-6 months to complete, during which time access to the boat launch ramp and associated facilities, such as the public restroom and fish cleaning station, would be disrupted. The staging for construction activities for the proposed project would require the temporary use of 15 trailer parking spaces that will only be used while the boat launch ramp is closed for construction. To minimize disruptions as much as is feasible, public access along the coastal trail will be maintained by implementing a small detour (see **Exhibit 2**). Furthermore, 3 out of the 4 large parking lots serving the boat launch and Pillar Point Harbor would remain open. To mitigate further for potential public access impacts during construction, **Special Condition 2** requires that the proposed project minimize construction and staging areas to the maximum extent possible to limit impacts to public access, and construction activities would be prohibited outside of these defined areas. Furthermore, the proposed project requires that public roadways adjacent to the demolition site, off-load site, and staging areas be cleaned and that all access points adversely impacted by development activities be restored to pre-construction condition or better within three days of completion of construction. Once construction of the project is complete, it will maintain and enhance public recreational access and facilities, including for boating recreation, and it is thus 'self-mitigating' in terms of the impacts described in that sense. Thus, the proposed project, as conditioned, can be found consistent with the Coastal Act's public recreational access provisions.

Marine and Biological Resources

In addition, the Coastal Act requires the maintenance, enhancement, and where feasible, restoration of marine resources. The maintenance of biological productivity and quality of coastal waters, streams, wetlands and estuaries is also required. As previously discussed, the boat launch area is situated at Pillar Point Harbor between the inner and outer breakwaters, and therefore any in-water work on the boat launch ramp and boarding floats has the potential to impact the marine benthic habitats, as well as special-status invertebrates, fish, reptile, bird and marine mammal species that use those waters.² Runoff from land-side construction activities also has the potential to adversely impact water quality in the immediate area if not controlled.

While most of the project activities would occur on land, the proposed project would involve limited in-water work including the slight extension of the existing boat launch ramp, replacement of the boarding floats, and cleaning and coating some of the existing concrete piles. This portion of the project would be performed during low-tide or "in the dry" as much as is feasible. In order to ensure that marine wildlife species are adequately protected, the project is conditioned to include a silt curtain to isolate the launch ramp area and limit direct and indirect impacts from disturbed sediment (see **Special Condition 2**). No pile driving or other in-water construction is proposed that would expose marine wildlife species to high-intensity sounds. The removal, repair, and expansion of components of boat launch ramp and boarding floats could potentially

² Specifically, several special-status species are known to be present within the project area, including California brown pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis californicus*), double-crested cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*), harbor seal (*Phoca vitulina*), and California sea lion (*Zalophus californicus*). Several other species were identified to have low, moderate, or high potential to occur within the study area, including federally threatened and endangered species.

involve discharge of construction materials into harbor waters if precautions are not taken to ensure that debris and residual materials are collected and properly disposed of. To protect against such potential impacts to water quality and marine resources, **Special Condition 2** imposes construction requirements, including general construction and over-water construction best management practices, to ensure that marine resources and water quality are protected and maintained during construction consistent with Coastal Act requirements. These measures include best management practices related to the application of coatings and sealants, spill prevention and debris removal to ensure adverse impacts to terrestrial and marine habitats are avoided. In short, as conditioned, implementation of the proposed project would be consistent with the Coastal Act regarding the maintenance of the biological productivity of coastal waters and the protection of marine resources.

In addition, the Coastal Act requires sensitive species and their habitats be protected from significant disruption. The project's biological resource assessment found that two special-status bird species are present in the project area, and identified several nesting special-status bird species and/or nesting birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the California Fish and Game Commission (CFGF) which have potential to occur in the terrestrial portions of the study area during nesting season (February 1 to September 15). To ensure Coastal Act consistency and protection of such resources, **Special Condition 3** requires pre-construction nesting bird surveys during the breeding season and, should active nests be identified, the establishment of no-disturbance buffer zones. As such, the project as conditioned ensures protection for such habitats and species as required by the Coastal Act.

The project proposes a limited extension of the boat launch ramp which will necessitate dredging and some fill of open coastal waters. The Coastal Act allows dredging and fill (where the proposed project constitutes "fill" by the placement of the extended boat ramp and scour rock) in limited circumstances (see Section 30233 in **Exhibit 3**). Projects that include fill and dredging must 1) be for an allowable use, 2) be the least environmentally damaging feasible alternative, and 3) provide adequate mitigation. Fill is allowed for new or expanded boating facilities as is proposed for the Harbor via this project; thus, the proposed project is allowable under the Coastal Act. Further, as proposed and conditioned the project appears to be the least environmentally damaging alternative because it generally builds upon the existing footprint of the boat launch ramp to continue to accommodate recreational boating, thus meeting the second test of Coastal Act Section 30233. To ensure that the impacts of the new fill for this specific proposal are adequately mitigated, the project is also conditioned to require the removal of debris from the harbor to offset the additional fill proposed by the project (**Special Condition 4**) thus meeting the third test of Coastal Act Section 30233.

Coastal Hazards

Regarding Coastal Act requirements around minimizing risks in light of coastal hazards, the proposed project is located within Pillar Point Harbor in an area that is subject to coastal hazards from ocean waves, storms, tides, tsunamis, and flooding which may worsen with sea level rise. Siting new development, like the redeveloped boat launching facility, in such hazardous areas can increase risks and create adverse impacts contrary to Coastal Act requirements, due to the likelihood that such hazards will impact the

subject development, or other surrounding areas, due erosion, flooding, and potential for damage to structures. In order to assure this Applicant internalizes these increased hazard risks and the risks are not borne by the public, **Special Condition 11** requires that the Applicant recognize and assume the risks associated with developing in such a hazardous area, and waive future damage claims against the Commission.

Other

Future Permitting. The project site presents complicated coastal resource issues, and is the site of past Commission approvals as well as this CDP, and the Commission finds that it is critical that any future development associated with the approved development be considered in that context. Thus, **Special Condition 9** specifies that none of the CDP exemptions that might be provided by Coastal Act Section 30610 (and/or related implementing regulations) will apply to the approved development, and any and all future proposed development related to this project, and/or this CDP will require new CDPs or CDP amendments that are processed through the Coastal Commission, unless the Executive Director determines that such CDPs or CDP amendments are not legally required.

Indemnification. Coastal Act Section 30620(c)(1) authorizes the Commission to require applicants to reimburse the Commission for expenses incurred in processing CDP applications. Thus, the Commission is authorized to require reimbursement for expenses incurred in defending its actions on the pending CDP applications in the event that the Commission's action is challenged by a party other than the Applicant. Therefore, consistent with Section 30620(c), the Commission imposes **Special Condition 12** requiring reimbursement for any costs and attorneys' fees that the Commission incurs in connection with the defense of any action brought by a party other than the Applicant challenging the approval or issuance of this CDP, or challenging any other aspect of its implementation, including with respect to condition compliance efforts.

Other Agency Approvals. The project may require authorization from several other entities, including the California State Lands Commission, the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Mateo County, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and NOAA Fisheries. To ensure that the Applicant is able to carry out the proposed project consistent with the terms and conditions of this CDP, and to ensure that the proposed project is authorized by all applicable agencies, **Special Condition 8** requires the Applicants to submit written evidence of these other agencies authorizations of the project (as conditioned and approved by this CDP) or evidence that such authorizations are not required.

Minor Changes. Although a great deal of thought and planning has gone into the proposed project, including as it is affected by CDP terms and conditions, oftentimes minor unforeseen issues present themselves in complicated projects of this nature, particularly as construction gets underway, and it is important that the CDP is nimble enough to account for potential minor changes. Thus, minor adjustments to special condition requirements that do not require a CDP amendment or a new CDP (as determined by the Executive Director) may be allowed by the Executive Director if such

adjustments: (1) are deemed reasonable and necessary; and (2) do not adversely impact coastal resources (**Special Condition 10**).

Conclusion

In conclusion, absent a project, the boat launch ramp and associated facilities will continue to deteriorate, and ADA accessibility will continue to be limited. The proposed project would improve the longevity and accessibility of the public boat launching facilities, including the boat launch ramp, restrooms, parking and walkways, by replacing aging infrastructure. In sum, the proposed improvements to Pillar Point Harbor's public boat launching facility would help to better support coastal-dependent uses such as recreational boating, as well as provide for greatly enhanced public recreational access, all the while appropriately protecting the marine environment, including providing benthic mitigation that should help to enhance such resources. For all the above reasons, the project as conditioned can be found consistent with the requirements of the Coastal Act.

D. California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CEQA Section 21080.5(d)(2)(a) prohibits a proposed development from being approved if there are feasible alternatives and/or feasible mitigation measures available that would substantially lessen any significant adverse effect that the development may have on the environment. San Mateo County, acting as lead CEQA agency, determined that the proposed project was categorically exempt from CEQA review pursuant to Section 15302(b), and thus the County did not identify any significant adverse environmental effects from the proposed project.

The Commission's review, analysis, and decision-making process for CDPs and CDP amendments has been certified by the Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency as being the functional equivalent of the environmental review required by CEQA (CCR Section 15251(c)). Accordingly, in fulfilling that review, this report has analyzed the relevant coastal resource issues with the proposal and has identified appropriate and necessary modifications to address adverse impacts to such coastal resources. The Commission finds that only as modified and conditioned herein will the proposed project avoid significant adverse effects on the environment within the meaning of CEQA. Thus, the proposed project as modified will not result in any significant environmental effects for which feasible mitigation measures have not been employed, consistent with CEQA Section 21080.5(d)(2)(A).

5. APPENDICES

A. Substantive File Documents³

- Pillar Point Harbor Boat Launching Facility Improvements Project Biological Resources Assessment – March 2025

³ These documents are available for review from the Commission's North Central Coast District office.

2-25-0424 (Pillar Point Harbor Boat Launch Improvements)

- CDP 2-22-0726 Surfers Beach Sand Restoration Project
- Surfers Beach Pilot Restoration Project Pre-Construction Eelgrass Report – July 2025

B. Staff Contacts with Agencies and Groups

- San Mateo County Harbor District