



STAFF REPORT

AGENDA NO: 11c

MEETING DATE: December 1, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council

Date: December 1, 2025

From: Neda Zayer, Community Development Director – (650) 558-7253

Subject: Adoption of a Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Execute a Professional Services Agreement in the Amount of \$1,500,000 with Raimi and Associates for the Preparation of a Bayfront Specific Plan and Consideration of the Creation of a Subcommittee for the Bayfront Specific Plan

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt the attached resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a Professional Services Agreement in an amount not to exceed \$1,500,000 with Raimi and Associates for the preparation of a Bayfront Specific Plan and consider creating a City Council subcommittee for the Plan.

BACKGROUND

In 2015, the City of Burlingame initiated a multi-year process focused on a community-led effort to update the City's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, called "Envision Burlingame." The City Council adopted the 2040 General Plan in 2019, and the Zoning Ordinance in 2021. With the adoption of the 2040 General Plan, the former Bayfront Specific Plan, first adopted in 2004, and former North Burlingame/Rollins Road Specific Plan, also first adopted in 2004, were repealed and superseded by the 2040 General Plan.

The 2040 General Plan increased the allowable development intensity within the Bayfront Commercial zoning district from a 1.0 FAR to a 3.0 FAR, prompting significant redevelopment interest in the bayfront area. Approximately three million square feet of office and R&D space is now entitled in the bayfront area, with several projects already completed.

Burlingame's bayfront comprises roughly 2.5 linear miles along the San Francisco Bay and serves as a major economic hub, containing 11 hotels, regional office facilities—including META Reality Labs—and various industrial and logistics businesses that benefit from proximity to San Francisco International Airport (SFO). The area also includes key recreational and open-space assets such as the Bay Trail, City sports fields, and the new Topgolf facility.

In light of these factors, the need for a Bayfront Specific Plan to establish a long-term vision for the next 10–20 years for the area and to guide future development was discussed at the Joint Planning

Commission and City Council study session on April 17, 2025. The City Council directed staff to initiate preparation of a Bayfront Specific Plan.

DISCUSSION

The Community Development Department sought proposals from qualified consulting teams to assist with the preparation of a new Bayfront Specific Plan. The City released a Request for Proposals from July 21, 2025 to August 28, 2025, and received responses from Good City, Perkins Eastman, Perkins Will, and Raimi and Associates.

All four consulting teams were interviewed on October 7 and 9, 2025, by a panel consisting of the Community Development Director, Public Works Director, Parks and Recreation Director, Sustainability Program Manager, and the Economic Development and Housing Specialist. Based on the submitted proposals and the interviews conducted, the panel's top selection was the Raimi and Associates consultant team based upon: 1) experience preparing numerous specific plans in comparable jurisdictions in the Bay Area, and experience with Burlingame bayfront projects; 2) experience with and approach to urban design, including specialization in streetscape and open space design; 3) an approach to collaborative and targeted community, property owner, and stakeholder engagement; and 4) the overall expertise of the team assembled for the project.

Project Consultant Team

The consultant team is composed of approximately 20 members across six firms that will be lending their expertise and experience to the Bayfront Specific Plan. The team consists of:

- **Raimi + Associates (Raimi):** Raimi will serve as the prime consultant, manage the project team, lead the land use planning, prepare the development standards, create and design the Specific Plan, and lead the community engagement process.
- **CMG Landscape Architecture (CMG):** CMG will lead the streetscape, public realm, and sea-level rise adaptation components of the project. CMG has worked on several bayfront development projects.
- **Hexagon Transportation Consultants (Hexagon):** Hexagon will lead the multi-modal transportation analysis and Specific Plan transportation chapter development. Hexagon was also involved in the 2019 General Plan.
- **Economic & Planning Systems (EPS):** EPS will lead the market and economic analysis, including analysis of cost/benefits and revenue impacts of potential redevelopment, and development of financing mechanisms for infrastructure improvements.
- **BKF Engineers (BKF):** BKF will provide civil engineering expertise and lead the utilities analysis. BKF prepared the Old Bayshore Highway Feasibility Study.
- **David J. Powers and Associates (DJP):** DJP will be the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) lead for this project. DJP prepared the 2019 General Plan Environmental Impact Report and has worked on several bayfront development projects.

The consultant team brings extensive, relevant expertise across their respective disciplines. Attached is a summary of key projects they have completed in Burlingame and neighboring communities, including Redwood City, Sunnyvale, Mountain View, and South San Francisco.

Specific Plan Key Components

A specific plan is a detailed planning document for a defined geographic area that guides future development and implementation. It provides more precise direction than a general plan by establishing regulations, development standards, and requirements for land use, infrastructure, and public improvements. Specific plans offer greater certainty and consistency for development and can streamline future project approvals.

The Bayfront Specific Plan will address the following key components:

1. **Zoning and Development Standards:** The Specific Plan process will evaluate existing and allowable uses in the Plan area and determine whether adjustments are needed based on the City's evolution, proposed development, and the community's long-term vision. It will include thoughtful engagement with stakeholders and the public to identify the uses most needed and desired in the area.
2. **Transportation:** The Plan area is bound by Highway 101 to the south, which divides the area from the remainder of Burlingame. In addition, there is only one access point, Broadway, from the Plan area across Highway 101 within city limits. This presents a transportation access and circulation challenge for the existing and future businesses and users of the area. A multi-modal transportation analysis of the area will be done to understand the transportation impacts and develop solutions to serve the area given the geographical constraints.
3. **Economic Analysis:** The Plan area is a significant economic base and opportunity area in Burlingame. Given this, an economic assessment of the area that includes major clusters, employment, and economic impacts will be performed as part of the Specific Plan effort. Potential economic costs/benefits of key parcels will be assessed as well as revenue impacts if hotel properties were redeveloped or lost. The assessment will help aid in identifying the highest and best uses for the area, emerging trends and businesses, and how to protect and build upon the economic vitality of the area.

In addition, information on different financing mechanisms the City could consider during Specific Plan implementation will be included, specifically to fund the infrastructure improvements and sea level rise fortification needs of the Plan area beyond the use of development impact fees.

4. **Streetscape and Open Space Design:** A comprehensive streetscape and open-space design will be developed for the Plan area to strengthen placemaking, create distinctive public spaces, and better connect and activate the Bay Trail. The design will incorporate and expand upon the existing Old Bayshore Highway Feasibility Study to look for ways to maximize the benefits and use of the public realm.
5. **Sea Level Rise Adaptation:** The bayfront area consists largely of imported fill and includes low-lying properties vulnerable to flooding and sea-level-rise hazards. Because Burlingame's shoreline is protected by a hard-edge seawall rather than natural wetlands,

its exposure is heightened. The Specific Plan will integrate and build upon the OneShoreline project through design and policy strategies that guide future development and infrastructure improvements while creating a natural and inviting environment to enhance the Bay Trail.

Project Approach

The Specific Plan process will be structured into four key phases, with community engagement integrated at major milestones throughout. Below is an overview of each phase, along with a summary of the overall engagement approach. These phases and associated engagement activities are also reflected in the project schedule, illustrating how they interrelate and where community engagement will be incorporated. The project is expected to take approximately two and a half to three years to complete.

Project Phases

1. **Background and Existing Conditions Analysis:** This phase will be at the beginning of the project before or as community engagement begins. A series of reports will be prepared covering key topics in the Plan area. Each report will document existing conditions and review relevant documents specific to each topic. The reports will analyze strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for the Bayfront to be used to develop materials for public discussions and develop alternatives, policies, and development standards for the Specific Plan.
2. **Alternatives and Analysis:** This phase of work will explore the goals and long-term vision of the project. Engagement with the community and stakeholders will help inform the future vision for the area and the main issues and concerns, resulting in an outline of conceptual alternatives to study and analyze. This phase will be where the majority of the community discussions will occur and key topics and issues will be resolved before moving on to the next phase.
3. **Plan Preparation:** This phase of work will begin with summarizing the direction from the City Council into an outline of the preferred plan elements. Following confirmation of the plan elements, the team will develop the Specific Plan.
4. **Environmental Analysis (CEQA):** The 2019 General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR) evaluated increased development along the bayfront; however, much of this additional development has already been entitled, and additional development beyond what was analyzed in the EIR is anticipated. Based on this understanding, and the changes that may be proposed through the Specific Plan process, it is anticipated that a new EIR that will tier from the 2019 General Plan EIR will be needed. An EIR can take 9-12 months to prepare, which accounts for a significant part of the project schedule, and begins after the Alternatives and Analysis phase is complete.

Community Outreach and Engagement

At the beginning of the project, a more detailed outreach and engagement strategy incorporating the activities outlined below will be prepared to be used throughout the process. This strategy will define meeting formats, objectives, schedules, activities, materials, and approaches. It will be

continuously refined as the process unfolds to address emerging needs, adapt approaches, or adjust strategies as some topics may require more engagement or discussion, and others may be more straightforward.

- **Community Advisory Committee with City Council Subcommittee:** A Community Advisory Committee (CAC) composed of key stakeholders, property owners, community members, and the City Council Subcommittee will meet to discuss key topics and be a sounding board for ideas and direction. Currently there are four CAC meetings identified in the schedule with the Consultant Team.
- **Technical Advisory Committee:** A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will be formed consisting of City staff and key government stakeholders such as OneShoreline, the San Francisco Bay Conservation & Development Commission (BCDC), the San Francisco International Airport (SFO), the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA), and other relevant agencies. The TAC will provide detailed technical input/feedback on key project deliverables and help ensure alignment between the Specific Plan and other local and regional planning efforts. Currently there are four TAC meetings identified in the schedule with the Consultant Team.
- **Stakeholder Meetings:** During the project initiation phase, informal stakeholder meetings will be conducted with specific property owners, elected or appointed officials, public agencies, and community leaders within the plan area to get insight into issues, concerns, and opportunities. Currently 12 stakeholder meetings are identified in the scope and schedule.
- **Property Owner Meetings:** In addition to the CAC meetings and the stakeholder meetings, up to four property owner and developer group meetings are identified.
- **Community Meetings:** Two community meetings are planned during the Specific Plan process to define existing conditions, key strategies, and review and discuss alternatives. Each two-hour meeting will include an opening presentation followed by interactive exercises. These could be virtual or in-person meetings and are intended to be extensions of CAC meetings that are organized to support larger participation.
- **Community Survey:** An online survey will be conducted to reach a broader audience within the city. The survey will be developed to receive feedback on the outline of concepts and proposed changes in the Plan area.
- **City Council and Planning Commission Study Sessions:** City Council study sessions are proposed at key junctures in the project and to provide regular updates to the City Council on the project.

In addition, two joint Planning Commission/City Council study sessions are proposed at two key stages in the process. These sessions will provide an opportunity for the Planning Commission and City Council to provide direction on the potential changes and modifications within the Plan area.

Professional Services Agreement

Attached is a proposed Professional Services Agreement with Raimi and Associates for a not-to-exceed amount of \$1,500,000 and three-year period for the preparation of a Bayfront Specific Plan. This includes the cost of preparing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project. The

scope of services, schedule of charges/payments, and activity schedule are included as exhibits to agreement and attached to this staff report.

FISCAL IMPACT

In FY 2016-17, Enterprise paid the City of Burlingame \$1,854,000.00 as mitigation for the adverse economic impact resulting from the continued underutilization of the Enterprise site for long-term airport parking, which affects the redevelopment potential of the Bayfront area.

These funds have been set aside and are proposed to be used to develop the Bayfront Specific Plan, a project that will guide and facilitate redevelopment in the Bayfront, including the Enterprise site. The Specific Plan will evaluate land uses, establish development and infrastructure standards, conduct an economic analysis of the area, and prepare an environmental document for use in future projects, including the Enterprise site.

No other funding is proposed to be used for this project.

Exhibits:

- Resolution
- Professional Services Agreement with Raimi and Associates
- Exhibit A: Scope of Services
- Exhibit B: Schedule of Charges/Payments
- Exhibit C: Activity Schedule
- Project Experience