



DTSC Is Helping Reshape the Alameda Waterfront

A DTSC-involved cleanup of a former Navy base is helping create the centerpiece of Alameda's ambitious waterfront revitalization effort – a public marina, ferry terminal, dining and retail, and high-end housing.

About 224 acres were transferred from military ownership to the city in April. The property is a small part of a mammoth 2,634-acre development project called "[Alameda Point](#)." But it is a crucial component.

The transfer included Seaplane Lagoon, the centerpiece of Alameda's planned Waterfront Town Center, said Jim Fyfe, who is managing the Alameda Point project for the California Department of Toxic Substances Control.

Said Jennifer Ott, the base reuse manager: "The City of Alameda is thrilled to take ownership of this crucial portion of the former base that will facilitate our first phase of development starting this year and of the Seaplane Lagoon, the future home of a new ferry terminal and the centerpiece of our proposed transit-oriented community."

Alameda Point is proposed to have 1,425 housing units, 5.5 million square feet of commercial uses and over 200 acres of parks and open space over the next 30 years. City officials estimate 9,000 permanent jobs, countless numbers of temporary construction jobs and millions of dollars in new tax revenue.

The area has an industrial history that includes a borax processing plant and an oil refinery that operated from 1879 to 1903. In 1927, an airport, dubbed the San Francisco Bay Airdrome, was constructed on the west end of Alameda and used by Pan American Airlines for their first trans-Pacific flights. The City of Alameda ceded the Airdrome property to the U.S. Government in 1936, officially selling the site for \$1.00. Then came the military and Alameda Naval Station, which operated from 1940 to 1997.

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An artists rendering of the completed project.





Alameda Point (continued)

Its pre-military and military legacy includes contaminants such as solvents, fuel, lead and other heavy metals, pesticides, herbicides and even ammunition. The property was added to the National Priority List in 1999, and US EPA, DTSC and the San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control board share cleanup oversight, with DTSC as the lead state agency.

The Department provides geological, toxicological (eco and human), legal, and engineering review, as needed, for all documents related to remediation and works with the Navy and other regulatory agencies to determine the best type of remediation at each site at Alameda.

“DTSC has been actively involved at every step in the cleanup process leading up to the parcel transfer,” Fyfe said. “Additionally, after all of Alameda Point has been transferred.... DTSC will be the main agency responsible for ensuring the effectiveness of any institutional controls protecting the public and the environment.”

The city started developing Alameda Point in 2000, and has created more than 100 businesses employing about 1,000 people. The land is being cleaned up or, in some cases, land-use covenants are restricting use as the city moves ahead.



The Seaplane Lagoon at dusk, looking west towards San Francisco

In June 2013, the city took title to 1,400 acres. In November 2014, the Navy transferred 624 acres to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for proposed offices, clinic and columbarium. Additional property will be kept as open space, including a proposed nesting site for an endangered [California least tern](#).

In April, the San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority approved a Memorandum of Understanding with the city of Alameda for a Seaplane Lagoon Ferry terminal project that includes a mixed-use development and expanded ferry service, according [to a story](#) in East Bay Times.