

2. Land Use and Urban Design

Many areas of the Plan Area are currently run-down, poorly connected, or otherwise in underutilized or unimproved condition. Major redevelopment in the area will provide both opportunity and means to improve a number of deficiencies in the area. Potential land use and urban design related improvements associated with each alternative are analyzed below by topic: land use compatibility and impact on visual character. Each topical analysis explores the three alternatives individually. Following each analysis, a table provides a comparative summary of the impact of the three alternatives in each topic area.

Land Use Compatibility

One of the primary disincentives to new development and sources of impact on public health and quality of life in the Plan Area today is the poor separation or buffering between incompatible land uses. Locating residential areas near warehousing and heavy industry results in not only air quality and noise impacts to residents, but also discourages walking because large trucks or heavy traffic make streets uncomfortable, unattractive, or at worst unsafe. Similarly, industrial uses are less likely to reinvest in their facilities when they are concerned about residential encroachment that threatens to displace them or result in neighbors who will complain about external effects of their business. For example, an industrial bakery hoping to have truckloads of fresh bread out to the region before people wake up would result in noise conflicts with neighbors.

However, there are also beneficial opportunities in land use compatibilities and proper transitioning. For example, shared parking between different uses with differently timed peak needs for parking area may reduce the total area of parking that might need to be dedicated to parking lots, which has positive urban design, environmental, and quality of life impacts. Similarly, some uses, such as retail, can help buffer residential areas from the noise and air quality impacts of I-880 while also benefitting from proximity to it. The following section describes land use compatibility pros and cons of each alternative.

Alternative 1

West Subarea

- The continued existence of ConAgra and protection of the food-related industrial area from the inflow of further residential development help to better secure the long-term viability of this industry in the face of economic pressures from residential land uses.
- These industrial uses are currently well buffered from residential uses and have easy freeway access, which provides good conditions for continued industrial use.

Central-West Subarea

- Two additional residential developments and continued live/work infill in this Subarea would further the steady conversion to a more pure residential neighborhood with some supporting industry.
- Loss of industry is not a major concern in this area.
- A new park at the Park Street triangle, if feasible, would be a valuable amenity to this neighborhood.

Central-East Subarea

- The new industrial business park would be a marked improvement over the existing Owens-Brockway heavy industrial facility in terms of compatibility with surrounding uses.

- New industrial layout of the Owens Brockway area in formats that are in demand in the area and region might increase the efficiency of industrial use of this area, which will compensate, at least in part, for the loss of industrial space on the east side of this subarea.
- Residences along Elmwood Avenue would continue to be squeezed between industry and I-880.
- New residential development between Alameda and High Street would take advantage of this waterfront location and easy access to the freeway, but might be impacted by the heavy traffic on High Street.

East Subarea

- Regional-serving retail would benefit from visibility and access from I-880, as it is one of few uses that actually benefits from such proximity to a high volume freeway.
- The rear of this retail center would face new waterfront development south of Tidewater, which is not an ideal configuration from the perspective of the new residential development.
- New residential development would benefit from its adjacency to park space, but has poor access to circulation and neighborhood-oriented goods and services.
- Loss of industry in this area would have an impact in terms of City and regional land use, as these types of centrally-located distribution facilities are increasingly being displaced to more remote parts of the region, resulting in higher traffic congestion levels and greenhouse gas emissions.

Alternative 2

West Subarea

- To support the on-going mixed-use infill in the area behind Embarcadero Cove, focused planning could create a more vibrant mixed-use neighborhood and better support developing local businesses and the Beacon Day School.
- Some new residential development along Embarcadero across from Union Point Park would provide better transition to this City amenity.
- Redevelopment of ConAgra as planned waterfront development would take better advantage of the waterfront location and expand the thriving Kennedy Tract residential neighborhood, reducing development pressures there.
- New residential development in this area would be adjacent to the food-related industry, resulting in conflicts between these uses due to early morning activity and noise associated with the industry. This could result in food-related industry being slowly but continually displaced from the area in the long term.

Central-West Subarea

- New residential development and continued live/work infill in this Subarea would further the steady conversion to a more pure residential neighborhood with some supporting industry.
- Loss of industry is not a major concern in this area.
- New residential development in the West Subarea reduce development pressures in this neighborhood.

Central-East Subarea

- The new R&D incubator and associated industrial redevelopment would be a marked improvement over the existing Owens-Brockway heavy industrial facility in terms of compatibility with surrounding uses.
- New industrial layout of the Owens Brockway area in formats that are in demand in the area and region might increase the efficiency of industrial use in this area.
- A major R&D incubator facility at the Owens Brockway site could generate new industry to inhabit and reinvest in industrial space, helping to rejuvenate and solidify the position of industry in this area.
- The R&D facility would also generate industrial reinvestment in the area between Alameda Avenue and High Street.
- Residences along Elmwood Avenue would continue to be undesirably close to industry and I-880.
- Industrial space between Alameda Ave and High Street would remain and might experience minor infill redevelopment to make more effective use of space.

East Subarea

- This area, which is prime industrial space due to its central location within the region and easy freeway access, would continue to be an enclave of industrial space, well buffered from residential and other incompatible uses.

Alternative 3

West Subarea

- Mixed-use infill would be allowed to continue throughout the food-related industrial area, as has occurred under current conditions.
- Redevelopment of ConAgra as planned waterfront development would take better advantage of the waterfront location and expand the thriving Kennedy Tract residential neighborhood, reducing development pressures there.
- Residential uses would front onto the waterfront and new Embarcadero Boulevard that runs through the ConAgra site.
- New residential development in this area would be adjacent to the food-related industry, resulting in conflicts between these uses due to early morning activity and noise associated with the industry. This could result in food-related industry being slowly but continually displaced from the area in the long term.

Central-West Subarea

- New residential development and continued live/work infill in this Subarea would further the steady conversion to a more pure residential neighborhood with some supporting industry.
- Loss of industry is not a major concern in this area.
- Residential redevelopment of the warehouses between Lancaster Street and Fruitvale Avenue would allow the continuous Embarcadero Boulevard to better connect the neighborhood to the east and add a new large multifamily residential building to buffer the neighborhood from Fruitvale Ave.

Central-East Subarea

- Owens Brockway would be redeveloped as a waterfront residential development, extending the Kennedy Tract neighborhood to the east.
- This would better integrate the Elmwood Avenue residential area into the fabric of the neighborhood.
- Industrial space between Alameda Ave and High Street would be redeveloped as retail space near the freeway and residential development along the waterfront, providing a consistent residential waterfront across the majority of the area.
- Loss of existing industrial development would be substantial and would have an impact in terms of City and regional land use, as this type of centrally-located distribution facilities are increasingly being displaced to more remote parts of the region.

East Subarea

- High-density residential towers would take advantage of the spectacular waterfront views and park access and provide a continuous residential waterfront throughout the Plan Area.
- A major R&D incubator facility to generate new industry to inhabit and reinvest in area industrial space north of Tidewater would help rejuvenate and solidify the position of industry in this area.
- New industrial layouts resulting from infill redevelopment of the area north of Tidewater, in formats that are in demand in the area and region, might increase the efficiency of industrial use of this area.
- The residential area south of Tidewater and industrial uses to the north would be buffered from each other by R&D offices along Tidewater.
- Loss of industry in this area would have an impact in terms of City and regional land use, as this type of centrally-located distribution facilities are increasingly being displaced to more remote parts of the region.

Table 2.1: Land Use Compatibility

Subarea	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
West	++	+	+
Central West	+	+	+
Central East	+	+	++
East	+	+	+

++ = Significantly Improved

+ = Improved

0 = Unchanged

- = Decreased

Impact on Visual Character

The Central Estuary Area is a widely-varied mix of visual experiences. Some areas are attractive, with unique and attractive industrial and residential buildings, while others are characterized by crumbling streets along a large concrete wall with little visual appeal. New development and investment in the area’s

infrastructure will provide the opportunity to improve the aesthetic experience of the area, which will benefit all those who live, work and play in the area as well as those who pass through it.

Alternative 1

West Subarea

There will be no noticeable change in this area.

Central-West Subarea

The new park and potential streetscape improvements on 29th Avenue would provide a better visual transition between industrial to the west and residential to the east. New residential would be developed in styles similar to other recent development in the area. Replacement of the Oakland Museum Women’s Board Warehouse would allow for more continuous open space and greening of the waterfront. New development may provide necessary revenue for neighborhood streetscape and infrastructure improvements.

Central-East Subarea

Redevelopment of Owens Brockway would remove the unsightly barrier walls that surround this facility and smokestacks associated with heavy industry. New industry would be more attractive and surrounded by landscape buffering. Planned waterfront development between Alameda Ave and High Street would open this section of waterfront for greening and public use, remove older industrial space, and provide necessary revenue for area streetscape and infrastructure improvements.

East Subarea

Significant visual improvement south of Tidewater, particularly notable along the park, would be a major improvement for this area. New retail north of tidewater would add visual order and potentially improve the street environment along High Street. New development would provide necessary revenue for neighborhood streetscape and infrastructure improvements.

Alternative 2

West Subarea

Waterfront residential buildings, open space, and a new park would provide a dramatic improvement at the former ConAgra site. New development would provide necessary revenue for area streetscape and infrastructure improvements.

Central-West Subarea

New residential buildings would be developed in styles similar to other recent development in the area. New development could provide some revenue for neighborhood streetscape and infrastructure improvements.

Central-East Subarea

Redevelopment of Owens Brockway would remove the unsightly barrier walls that surround this facility and smokestacks associated with heavy industry. New industry would be more attractive and surrounded by landscape buffering.

East Subarea

More certainty about the security of the future of this area would encourage investment by existing and potential future industry in the area. Gradual redevelopment of area industry would allow infrastructure deficiencies to be remedied. New industry would be more attractive and surrounded by landscape buffering.

Alternative 3

West Subarea

There will be no noticeable change in the food-related industrial area. Waterfront residential buildings and open space and a tree-lined Embarcadero boulevard will provide a dramatic improvement at the former ConAgra site. New development would provide necessary revenue for area streetscape and infrastructure improvements.

Central-West Subarea

The new park and potential streetscape improvements on 29th Avenue would provide a better connection between residential development to the west and east. New residential would be developed in styles similar to other recent development in the area. New development may provide necessary revenue for neighborhood streetscape and infrastructure improvements, including a continuous tree-lined Embarcadero boulevard along Glascock Street and connecting to the east.

Central-East Subarea

Waterfront residential buildings and open space and a tree-lined Embarcadero boulevard would provide a dramatic improvement at the former Owens Brockway site and waterfront warehousing. New development would provide necessary revenue for area streetscape and infrastructure improvements, including streetscape improvements on Alameda Avenue and High Street.

East Subarea

Significant visual improvement south of Tidewater, particularly notable along the park, would be a major improvement for this area. New industry north of Tidewater would add visual order and potentially improve the street environment along High Street. New development would provide necessary revenue for area streetscape and infrastructure improvements.

Table 2.2: Visual Character

Subarea	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
West	0	+	+
Central West	+	+	+
Central East	++	+	++
East	++	+	++

++ = Significantly Improved

+ = Improved

0 = Unchanged

- = Decreased