

FEBRUARY 2004

Project Update for the Public Health Service Hospital *Presidio of San Francisco*



Public Health Service Hospital

PROJECT STATUS

The Presidio Trust is proposing to undertake leasing and development of a residential community in the Public Health Service Hospital District of the Presidio of San Francisco. An environmental assessment of alternatives for the project is available for public comment, and the Trust Board of Directors will hold a public board meeting on Wednesday, April 14, 2004, 6:30 p.m. at the Presidio Officers' Club to receive verbal comments on both the environmental assessment (EA) and the project. The Trust hopes to conclude the environmental process in the Summer of 2004, and to conclude development negotiations by the end of the year.

PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Public Health Service Hospital project will help the Trust achieve its mission as mandated by Congress and as set out in the *Presidio Trust Management Plan*.

The purpose of and need for the project is described in the EA, which also lists the following leasing objectives:

- **Preserve the historic buildings of the district**
- **Revitalize and reuse the project site**
- **Limit the traffic and parking demand**
- **Generate revenue to support the park for public enjoyment**
- **Achieve the highest quality of environmentally sustainable design**



The Public Health Service Hospital has been subject to vandalism and deterioration.

- **Protect natural resources within and adjacent to the district**

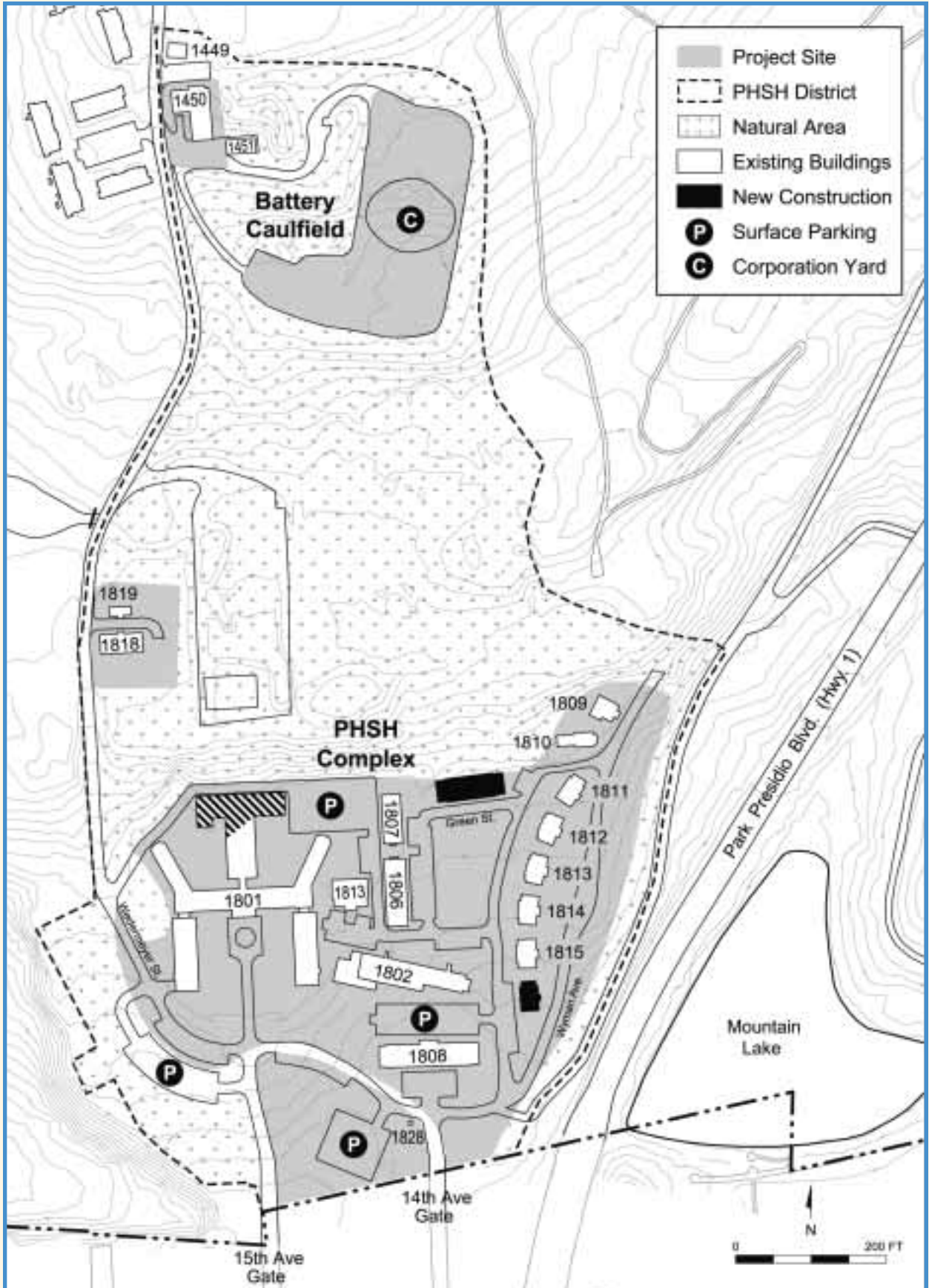
PROJECT HISTORY

In August 2002, after a two-year public planning process, the Presidio Trust adopted its management plan for Area B of the Presidio of San Francisco.*** The *Presidio Trust Management Plan* (PTMP) sets out a general policy framework that balances the preservation of public open space and resources with building uses that support both the financial needs of the park and the mandate to serve the public.

The PTMP Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) analyzed alternative land uses for the Presidio, and under the “Final Plan Alternative,” it analyzed a “Residential and Educational Community” within the Public Health Service Hospital (PHSH) district.

In April 2003, the Presidio Trust issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to rehabilitate and lease the former PHSH complex, approximately 400,000 square feet of buildings located near the intersection of 15th Avenue and Lake Street. The RFQ required that the main

***In 1996, recognizing that the Presidio needed a new kind of federal agency to carry out the transformation from military post to park, Congress established the Presidio Trust to oversee the inland 1,168 acres of the Presidio, known as Area B. The National Park Service manages the shoreline and Lobos Creek Valley, or Area A.



Alternative 2: Infill Alternative



The old hospital complex from 1875, at right, with the new hospital under construction at left. The photo is circa 1931.

hospital building, which is historic, be rehabilitated and converted to residential use. Other buildings within the complex were also made available.

The RFQ was distributed to more than 5,000 interested parties, and nine development teams responded. In August 2003, the Trust narrowed the field and issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to three teams: AvalonBay Communities, Inc., Forest City Development, and the John Stewart Company/Related Companies of California. AvalonBay subsequently withdrew from the process.

Environmental Review – On August 27, 2003, the Trust began the environmental review process of the PSHH project in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and distributed scoping materials to the public and interested government agencies. Scoping is the process by which an agency solicits public and agency input on the nature and extent of issues, impacts, and alternatives to be addressed

in an environmental review document. The scoping information distributed by the Trust included a project summary, a statement of the project’s purpose and need, a statement of project objectives, and a description of four conceptual project alternatives proposed for study in the PSHH EA.

The scoping period, which lasted more than three months, ended on December 10, 2003. It was extended once and included two public meetings of the Trust Board of Directors. During this scoping period, the Trust staff met with neighborhood, environmental, and preservation groups, individuals, and government agencies to discuss both the environmental review and the leasing process.

After reviewing all the comments received during the scoping period, the Trust modified the early scoping alternatives to reflect initial concerns expressed by the public about the size of the project and its impact on neighborhood traffic. Two of the original scoping alternatives were scaled back by 10 to 20 percent to create Alternatives 2 and 4 in the EA. Direct access to the site from Park Presidio Boulevard, the “Park Presidio Variant,” can be combined with all action alternatives.

The project-specific EA will use the PTMP EIS as its starting point (i.e. “tiering”). The PSHH EA tiers from the PTMP EIS and incorporates pertinent information and analysis. The EA focuses on the potential environmental impacts specific to the four alternatives that have not already been analyzed in the PTMP EIS. Project-specific impact topics include housing and land use, historic and visual resources, biology and hydrology, and traffic and parking.

PHSH Timeline

August 2002

The Trust adopts the *Presidio Trust Management Plan: Land Use Policies for Area B of the Presidio of San Francisco*

April 2003

The Trust issues RFQ for PSHH project and begins targeted outreach to interested parties

August 2003

Trust issues RFP and begins public scoping

October 2003

Trust receives detailed proposals and holds public board meeting

December 2003

Trust holds second public board meeting; public comment period ends

Some key findings of the EA are briefly summarized below (but cannot substitute for the more complete analysis and findings in the EA).

Project Proposals – The Trust received proposals from the Forest City and John Stewart teams on October 27, 2003. Forest City submitted two proposals, and John Stewart submitted one. All three proposals were consistent with the range of alternatives that the Trust proposed to study in its EA. Both teams stated a preference to retain the non-historic wings of the hospital, and not to build on Battery Caulfield.

A public board meeting was held on October 29 for the teams to present their initial proposals and to receive comment from the public. Members of neighborhood groups have engaged directly with the development teams to discuss the nature of the project and what affect it might have on the adjacent neighborhood.

The Trust expects to choose a development partner, and begin negotiations in March 2004. The Trust hopes to complete lease negotiations by the end of 2004.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Land Use – All alternatives would rehabilitate the main hospital building, developing a residential enclave with some educational uses, such as current tenants Lone Mountain School and Arion Press. Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 provide more housing units than the 210 specified in PTMP. Given the park-wide cap of 1,654 residential units stated in PTMP, the number of units in other areas of the park would necessarily be reduced.

Historic Preservation – All alternatives



Each alternative for the PSHH site would achieve rehabilitation of the historic hospital.

rehabilitate and reuse historic buildings on the lower plateau, and make use of the Federal Historic Tax Credit Program.

Open Space and Natural Resources – None of the alternatives precludes implementation of the Trust’s environmental remediation program, the *Vegetation Management Plan*, ongoing quail habitat conservation, or the *Presidio Trails and Bikeways Master Plan*. Alternative 4, however, would require mitigation to ensure that residential use at Battery Caulfield and in Building 1450 would not be detrimental to the quail population, and that the hydrology of the adjacent Nike swale area would not be compromised. All alternatives respect the recovery area for the San Francisco lyssingia, including the forested slope behind the main hospital, which is considered a “buffer” zone.

Visual Resources – All of the alternatives are an improvement over the present appearance of the site. The action alternatives would all

February - March 2004
Trust issues EA for public review and selects development partner

April 14, 2004
Trust to hold public board meeting to receive comment on EA and project

Fall 2004
Negotiations with development partner concluded

Spring 2005
Project construction begins

Fall 2007
PHSH available for occupancy

remove at least the one story lobby/loggia connecting the non-historic wings of the main hospital building, improving the aesthetic of that building. Alternative 2 allows for removal of the top two stories of the wings, reducing their mass, and Alternatives 3 and 4 would remove the non-historic hospital wings.

Traffic and Parking – The action alternatives would yield fewer daily and peak hour vehicle trips, and less parking demand than the land uses analyzed in the PTMP EIS, which is included in the EA as Alternative 1.

Park Presidio Boulevard Access – The variant provides for direct access to the site from Park Presidio Boulevard (Highway 1) via a new signal-controlled intersection approximately 400 feet north of the current intersection at Lake and Park Presidio Boulevard. The new intersection would allow southbound traffic on Park Presidio Boulevard to enter the PHSH site via a right turn, and would accommodate all exiting traffic. The 14th and 15th Avenue gates would only allow inbound Presidio access. The Presidio Trust supports development of the new access. This intersection requires approval by Caltrans, and the Presidio Trust has initiated discussions with Caltrans and asked for its support.

Revenue – All alternatives could generate at least \$1 million in annual base rent within several years of opening. Total annual base rent and total revenue would vary given different assumptions, such as the amount of the Trust's participation. Financial terms and actual revenue will be the outcome of lease negotiations.

Preferred Alternative – The Trust has identified Alternative 2 as its preferred alternative because it represents a moderate approach in terms of environmental impact, environmental benefits, and revenue generation. The characteristics of the alternative ultimately selected may change as a result of further public

Alternatives Studied in the Environmental Assessment

ALTERNATIVE 1

The PTMP or No Action Alternative leaves the existing 400,000 square feet of building space intact. It rehabilitates the buildings for residential and educational use, providing approximately 210 residential units in 210,000 square feet of space, and allowing 190,000 square feet for educational use.

ALTERNATIVE 2

The Infill Alternative rehabilitates the historic buildings as well as the non-historic wings of the hospital. Approximately 48,000 square feet of non-historic building space would be demolished, possibly including the top two stories of the hospital wings, and would be replaced with new infill construction on the lower plateau. Alternative 2 provides up to 350 residential units in 400,000 square feet.

ALTERNATIVE 3

The No Infill Alternative removes the hospital's non-historic wings as well as other non-historic buildings and additions, decreasing the district's square footage from 400,000 to 275,000. Alternative 3 provides approximately 230 residential units.

ALTERNATIVE 4

The Battery Caulfield Alternative rehabilitates the historic buildings in the district, and removes the hospital's non-historic wings and other non-historic buildings and additions, a total of approximately 116,000 square feet. It would replace approximately half of that removed space with new construction on Battery Caulfield. Alternative 4 provides 269 residential units, including 155 senior/assisted living units.

input as well as lease negotiations. No approval can be granted, and no lease or development agreement signed, until the public comment period is over and the environmental review process is complete.

THE PLANNING CONTEXT FOR THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE HOSPITAL DISTRICT

The PHSH district evolved as a separate entity, and like much of the Presidio, is an interesting and complex mix of historic and natural resources. The district has about 42 acres that are divided into two geographic areas, the lower and upper plateaus.

The lower plateau has 15 buildings, including the historic hospital and its complex of dormitories, offices, residences, and other support buildings. The upper plateau has remnant natural habitats adjoining the Presidio Trust/National Park Service maintenance and corporation yard, three underground former Nike missile silos, and a former Marine cemetery. The missile silos and the cemetery will be interpreted for visitors through appropriate signage and wayside exhibits.

The area that connects the two plateaus supports ecologically significant native plant communities. Together with “Quail Commons,” north of the Nike Missile site, this area supports the largest known quail population in San Francisco. The PTMP identifies natural resources for protection and enhancement, and over time the Trust and its partners will enhance natural areas in the PHSH district and surrounding districts.

Five former Army landfill sites needing environmental cleanup in or near the PHSH district are being addressed in compliance with governing environmental laws and agreements, and as part of the Trust’s comprehensive environmental remediation program. The Trust

will have remedy decisions for these sites by the end of 2004.

PTMP highlights the importance of the Presidio’s scenic and recreational resources. As part of the *Presidio Trails and Bikeways Master Plan*, adopted in July 2003, the Trust proposes to improve trail and bikeway corridors within the PHSH district.

The Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail will be improved as a pedestrian trail along the southern and western boundaries of the site. Other trail extensions include the Lobos Creek Valley Trail to the west, the West Pacific/Mountain Lake Corridor to the north, the Park Boulevard Trail to the northeast, and City Bicycle Route #69 (following Battery Caulfield Road, Wedemeyer Street, and 15th Avenue). The trail and bikeways improvements will link with surrounding destinations such as Mountain Lake and Lobos Valley, and connect to the local and regional trail system.

In the future, the Trust expects to propose a scenic overlook and trailhead, which would include visitor amenities, near the southwest corner of the PHSH site.



Park Presidio access option.

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

The Presidio Trust is pleased to announce the availability of the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Public Health Service Hospital (PHSH) project alternatives. The EA analyzes the effects of different project alternatives in accordance with the requirements and procedures of the National Environmental Policy Act and its implementing regulations and policies.

The EA may be viewed at or downloaded from the Trust's website at www.presidio.gov, following the link from the home page. A printed copy may be requested at no charge at (415) 561-5414 or phsh@presidiotrust.gov. **The public is invited to provide verbal comment on the PHSB EA at a public meeting of the Trust Board of Directors to be held on**

Wednesday, April 14, 2004, 6:30 p.m. at the Presidio Officers' Club, 50 Moraga Avenue.

Written comments may also be submitted to:

John Pelka, NEPA Compliance Manager
The Presidio Trust
34 Graham Street, P.O. Box 29052
San Francisco, CA 94129-0052
fax: (415) 561-2790
phsh@presidiotrust.gov

The public review period for the PHSB EA will end on April 30, 2004. Following the close of the public review period, the Trust will consider and respond to any written or verbal comments. If you would like additional information, or have questions regarding the document, please call (415) 561-5414 or email phsh@presidiotrust.gov.



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