



**News from
Office of the Mayor**

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**100 Years New:
Oakland Celebrates the Rededication of the Lake Merritt Boathouse**

Oakland, CA —Oakland Mayor Ron Dellums and City Councilmember Patricia Kernighan hosted a special ribbon-cutting ceremony today to rededicate the newly restored Lake Merritt Boathouse and celebrate its return to public use. The historic boathouse, originally dedicated in 1909, is the new home to three new tenants: Lake Chalet Seafood Bar & Grill, the Lake Merritt Rowing Club and Gondola Servizio.

“One hundred years ago, Oakland civic leaders had both the vision and the financial largesse to invest in the transformation of this beautiful jewel in the center of our city—Lake Merritt—by creating parkland and recreational opportunities around the lake and gracing its shores with architecturally beautiful buildings like the Lake Merritt Boathouse that have stood the test of time,” said Mayor Ron Dellums. “What a tremendous pleasure to stand here 100 years later and celebrate not only the renovation of these architectural gems, but the restoration of our parks and waterways that our children and grandchildren may enjoy for the next 100 years.”

Mayor Dellums and Councilmember Kernighan were joined by Oakland City officials, the building’s new tenants, historic preservationists, hundreds of community members, environmentalists, and members of five Oakland Rotary clubs to celebrate this important milestone in the building’s centennial year and to dedicate the grand stairway and plaza created by four Rotary Clubs in Oakland as part of Rotary International’s centennial celebration.

“The Rotary clubs’ contributions make the wonderfully renovated Lake Merritt Boathouse an even more inviting Oakland destination,” said City Councilmember Patricia Kernighan.

The \$19 million project to restore the historic Lake Merritt Boathouse and renovate four acres of adjacent parkland was funded by the Oakland Trust for Clean Water and Safe Parks, Measure DD, a \$198 million bond measure approved by Oakland voters in 2002.

History of the Lake Merritt Boathouse

The Lake Merritt Boathouse is one of the defining buildings on the shores of Lake Merritt. It was designed in 1908 by John Galen Howard as a high-pressure salt water pumping station for the City of Oakland Fire Department. Construction on the original structure was completed in 1909. In 1914 Walter D. Reed designed the addition of two building wings to function as the Municipal Boathouse. Mr. Reed was responsible for the design of several architectural gems at Lake Merritt, including the East 18th Street Pier, the Sailboat House and the Pergola and Colonnade.

Over the years the Boathouse served many functions including a restaurant, boating center and, most recently, city offices. In 2002, the Lake Merritt Master Plan recommended renovation of the building and reintroduction of historic activities including boating, a restaurant, café, rental hall and home for regattas and other events. With completion of the project, this fine Mission Revival building has been preserved and enhanced to serve the residents of Oakland for another one hundred years.

Return to Public Use: New Restaurant, New Tenants

Originally built in 1909, the historic boathouse was rehabilitated to LEED-NC Silver standards, using \$19 million of Measure DD (the Oakland Trust for Clean Water and Safe Parks) monies.

Chalet Management, operator of two highly successful dining destinations in San Francisco, has transformed the recently restored building into a spectacular lakefront restaurant. The top floor of the building will house the new **Lake Chalet Seafood Bar & Grill**, serving contemporary California cuisine, and featuring outdoor, lakeside seating.

In addition to the restaurant, the Boathouse will have two other tenants: Gondola Servizio and the Lake Merritt Rowing Club.

Gondola Servizio brings the romantic experience of the Venetian gondola by providing authentic gondola rides – complete with Italian melodies, skilled gondoliers, and lovely scenery – at the Lake Merritt location. Gondola Servizio proprietors April Quinn and Angelino Sandri met on a gondola ride and invite patrons to find their own inspiring experiences on a Venetian gondola.

Since 1962, the **Lake Merritt Rowing Club** has provided a wide range of rowing program for all ages and skill levels. The not-for-profit fosters interest in and provides opportunity for rowing in the Oakland area and is open to all community members who wish to learn the sport of rowing or refine their competitive skills. The Lake Merritt Rowing Club will occupy space on the lower level of the north and south wings of the building.

Sustainability

Given the complexity of rehabilitating and seismically strengthening an historic building built over the water, it is notable that the Boathouse will also be the first LEED-NC Silver certified building owned by the City of Oakland. Sustainable features include 100 percent daylighting,

exceeding Title 24 energy performance requirements by more than 25 percent, low VOC finishes, more than 50 percent certified wood, use of recycled water for landscaping, use of local materials and enhanced commissioning. Also green tenant guidelines were written to guide the buildout of the building. Permeable paving, a bioswale, and a living roof on the recycling building will help treat stormwater before it enters Lake Merritt.

Park Improvements

In addition to seismic and structural restoration of the Lake Merritt Boathouse, the project also included renovating four acres of parkland adjacent to the Boathouse along Lakeside Drive, including new trees, landscape improvements, pedestrian improvements, a new bike lane, addition of interpretive signage, upgraded boating facilities and features to improve water quality in Lake Merritt.

The new park layout defines a clear pathway for users of all types to move along the shoreline and offers places for viewing the lake. A decorative, multi-use path meets the grand stairs at the Boathouse main entry, creating a plaza. The parking area can host events such as regattas and small civic festivals. The lawn also hosts new activities. Stone markers trace the ancient shoreline of Lake Merritt.

Rotary Centennial Plaza

In celebration of Rotary International's Centennial anniversary, five Oakland Rotary clubs generously contributed \$100,000 to create a memorial plaza for the enjoyment of all. A grand stair with inscriptions of the Rotary's Four-Way Test complements the plaza that welcomes visitors to the Boathouse. Bronze leaves honor those who helped fund the improvements. The Rotary Clubs of Oakland include: Oakland Rotary 3, Piedmont-Montclair, Oakland Sunrise, East Oakland and North Oakland-Emeryville.

Measure DD Milestone

Renovation of the 100-year old Lake Merritt Boathouse is one of the premiere Measure DD projects. In November 2002, Oakland voters approved Measure DD—the Oakland Trust for Clean Water and Safe Parks—a \$198 million bond measure to fund parks, trails, bridges, a recreation center, historic building renovations, land acquisition and creek restoration.

Measure DD work at Lake Merritt includes a variety of projects to expand parkland, renovate buildings, enhance Children's Fairyland, improve water quality and wildlife habitat, calm traffic and improve pedestrian and bicycle access around the Lake and down the Channel towards the Bay.

Completed Measure DD Projects

Other Measure DD-funded projects which have already been completed include: renovation of the Lake Merritt Pergola; restoration of the historic East 18th Street Pier; the 66th Avenue Gateway project, a restful pocket park on the Oakland Waterfront Trail; Union Point Park, a new

nine-acre waterfront park; a new section of waterfront trail near the Fruitvale Bridge, renovation of Studio One arts and cultural center; creek restorations on Sausal Creek and Arroyo Viejo, acquisition of open space to protect watersheds, numerous water quality projects such as fountains and stormwater filters to improve water quality in Lake Merritt; and several projects at Children's Fairyland, including a new attraction called Fairy Music Farm, a new children's theater called Aesop's Playhouse, renovation of the puppet theater and improvements to the entryway and Chapel of Peace.

Other Measure DD Projects Underway at Lake Merritt

The last two major Lake Merritt improvement projects funded by Measure DD are the 12th Street project and the Lakeshore/El Embarcadero project.

The **12th Street project** will significantly reconfigure 34 acres at the south end of Lake Merritt. This project will result in a dramatic transformation of 12th Street from a high-speed commute route to a calmer, scenic boulevard with vastly improved pedestrian and bicycle access and enhanced safety. The project will remove the 12-lane expressway across the 12th Street dam and reconfigure it into a six-lane, tree-lined boulevard away from the Lake edge; create a new, four-acre shoreline park; open up the Lake Merritt channel to recreation and public access, with pedestrian and vehicular bridges crossing the channel; and create a tidal wetland, resulting in improved wildlife habitat and enhanced water quality. Construction of the 12th Street project is expected to begin in Spring 2010.

The **Lakeshore/El Embarcadero project** will fully renovate nine (9) acres of parkland on the west side of Lakeshore Avenue, adding new recreational pathways and a shoreline trail, creating new Class 2 bike lanes, relocating one traffic lane on El Embarcadero to create a new formal plaza just north of the Pergola and reconfiguring traffic lanes on Lakeshore Avenue to improve pedestrian and traffic safety. This project is slated for completion in late 2009.

Economic Development and Real Estate Opportunities

The restaurant has attracted significant private investment by Chalet Management to transform the Boathouse into a 350-seat restaurant. The project will provide jobs for Oakland residents and generate business tax and sales tax revenues for the City of Oakland. The restaurant will employ 140 people – most of whom are Oakland residents.

Chalet Management is just the latest San Francisco restaurant operator which has opened a location in Oakland. Several successful restaurateurs, such as the operators of Ozumo, Miss Pearl's Jam House, Bellanico, B Restaurant, Farley's East, Wood Tavern, and Levende East, have migrated east to join Oakland's hot dining scene.

Earlier this year, the complex leases related to this project received national recognition by *Commercial Investment Real Estate* magazine. In selecting the Boathouse lease as one of the Top Transactions for 2008, the selection committee recognized how the transaction will help contribute to the beautification of the lake and transform the building into a culinary destination. The 20-year lease was negotiated by Real Estate Division staff of the Community and Economic Development Agency.

Kudos to Project Design Team and Construction Contractors

The project was designed by WRT, a planning and landscape design firm, and Murakami/Nelson Architects. Together they met the challenge of designing an eco-friendly building and site while respecting the historic fabric of the Boathouse and of Lake Merritt Park itself.

Other design team members included Preservation Architecture, Zeiger Engineers, Degenkolb, Adrienne Wong & Associates, Sandis Humber Jones, McCracken & Woodman, Treadwell & Rollo, and KEMA. The building renovation construction work was performed by BBI Construction, and the site construction work was performed by McGuire & Hester, along with a large team of subcontractors.

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