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# Save the waterfront: Vote yes on H

**S**AN FRANCISCO'S waterfront is a limited and priceless resource. The waterfront provides recreational opportunities, employment, natural areas and a connection to The City's rich maritime history.

Proposition H will require The City to prepare a land use plan to ensure that the waterfront is protected from piecemeal development and inappropriate land uses, including a wall of luxury hotels.

Waterfront development decisions must be made based on a specific land use plan. Incredibly, current land use plans are many years old, are contradictory, are vague and fail to reflect the waterfront's importance to The City and its citizens.

But worse, the Port Commission rewrites the rules when it wants. For example, one plan calls for 800 hotel rooms on piers in the North Central Waterfront.

Last spring, the Port Commission approved two hotels for another area of the waterfront.

Not only did the Port Commission disregard its own plan, but it increased the number of potential hotels on the waterfront — despite the fact that San Franciscans are adamantly opposed to constructing a wall of luxury hotels cutting the city off from its waterfront.

Much has been made about hotel jobs which would be created by waterfront hotels. But these hotels would generate very few new jobs. The sailing center hotel would generate only about 130 jobs and could preclude opportunities for more jobs — but we will never know without a land use plan.

The hotels could be built in other locations, such as right across the Embarcadero, creating the same number of hotel jobs (and same port revenues) without hurting waterfront access at all.

Port commissioners argue that they need the hotels because they need money. Perhaps this is true, but what happens next time the Port needs money? Will more hotels be approved?

Remember, the current plan allows 800 more rooms in the North Central Waterfront. The only way to address the Port's long term financial needs is with a comprehensive plan which includes land uses, marketing strategies and regional resources.

Even the Port's \$200,000 Stra-

tegic Plan, completed just this year, recommends preparing a land use plan. Why the rush to build hotels, when the options have not been adequately studied and evaluated as recommended by the Port's own consultants?

**T**HE PORT has an ambitious maritime marketing plan which calls for spending \$99 million on capital projects. The Port believes that the only way to finance these improvements is by building hotels. This is simply untrue.

A clear and complete land use plan will outline a whole series of revenue generators which will improve the Port's overall financial condition.

One only need look at the Port's current leasing record to understand why the Port claims the need for building hotels.

For example, Pier 39 pays only one tenth of what other Wharf restaurants pay on sales of alcohol to the Port.

Even the Port admits that the proposed lease for the Pier 39 Aquarium is half the rent of a similar project proposed in Southern California. If the Port needs money so badly why doesn't it improve its

existing leases?

Some argue that Proposition H merely bans hotels without providing any direction for waterfront development or solutions for the Port's current problems. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The initiative lists over 16 maritime and acceptable non-maritime land uses for the waterfront that will not be affected by Proposition H. Furthermore, Prop. H allows all projects with permits to be built, and allows all existing businesses to expand and remodel. Finally, it includes criteria to determine if a land use is appropriate. These criteria will ensure that waterfront lands are used in the most beneficial manner for the Port and for San Franciscans.

**T**WENTY YEARS ago, the Port supported a 50-story U.S. Steel office building for the waterfront.

Today, no one could support such a project. Five years from now, when the fruits of a comprehensive waterfront land use plan are beginning to ripen, Prop. H will be seen in the same light as efforts to stop the U.S. Steel Building, an important step in protecting The City's priceless urban waterfront.

