

# 2 | THE PLANNING AREA

## 2.1 PLANNING AREA LOCATION

The Baylands is located approximately midway between San Francisco’s central business district and its international airport, as illustrated in Figure 2.1, and is one of the largest undeveloped tracts of urban land on the west San Francisco Bay Peninsula. The site is well served by regional transportation systems. U.S. Highway 101 is a major north-south freeway that provides direct access to the site from interchanges at Harney Way and Sierra Point Parkway. The Caltrain commuter rail between San Francisco and Gilroy and the Union Pacific freight lines both pass through the center of the Baylands. Rail spurs currently serve existing businesses in the area. With construction of the planned Intermodal Station at the north end of the Baylands, Caltrain and the San Francisco Municipal Railway (“MUNI”) T-Third Street Light Rail Transit (LRT) both will serve the area directly. In addition, implementation of the planned BRT along Geneva Avenue would ultimately connect Hunter’s Point and Candlestick Point to the Baylands and Balboa Park BART.

Within the City of Brisbane, the site is bounded by commercial and industrial development to the west, Central Brisbane to the southwest, the Sierra Point business park and municipal marina to the southeast (i.e., east of the freeway), and the Recology waste collection and recycling center on the north. Low intensity commercial development and manufacturing uses within Daly City border the area to the northwest (i.e., along Bayshore Boulevard north of Geneva Avenue); this area is part of Daly City’s Bayshore Redevelopment Area. In



Central Brisbane, adjacent to the Planning Area, offers an appealing small town environment.



The Lagoon at the south end of the Baylands offers unique natural resources and passive recreational potential.



**Figure 2.1 Location Map**

Credit: Microsoft Corp (2005),  
Navteq (2004), & US Census

In addition, Daly City's Geneva Avenue Urban Design Plan envisions higher intensity uses along that corridor in the future, including residential infill. Such improvements to the Bayshore Boulevard and Geneva Avenue corridors within Daly City would be consistent with the type of development envisioned within this Specific Plan. To the north immediately across the San Francisco city and county line that serves as the area's northernmost border, the former Schlage Lock site and other vacant industrial properties, parking for the Bayshore Caltrain Station, and the northern portion of the Recology facility are located in San Francisco's Visitacion Valley neighborhood. An affiliate of UPC owns the Schlage Lock site and is proposing the Vistacion Valley Transit-

Oriented Development (VVTOD) Project on the site, which would complement the development proposed by this Specific Plan. Office parks, residential development, and the San Francisco 49er's Candlestick Park are located on Candlestick Point northeast of the area and east of the freeway. Just north of Candlestick Point is the proposed Hunter's Point Redevelopment project, which is transforming the former shipyard into a mixed-use area of housing, businesses, and a green technology incubator. The entire east side of the Baylands area is bounded by U.S. 101, and beyond that opens out to dramatic views of San Francisco Bay and the East Bay skyline.

Several regional and local parks, including San Bruno Mountain State and County Park, Candlestick Point State Recreation Area, and McLaren Park are within a short walking or driving distance of the Baylands. Existing segments of the Bay Trail are located along Sierra Point Parkway and along Harney Way, with a connecting segment planned between the northern edge of Brisbane Lagoon and Beatty Avenue.



Aerial view of the Baylands, looking north towards San Francisco

The total area of the Brisbane Baylands Specific Plan area consists of approximately 548 upland acres (25 percent of the city's total land area) and 136 acres of Lagoon subarea, including 110 acres of open water, totaling 684 acres.<sup>1</sup> Although not all of the Lagoon district and its perimeter property are owned by Universal Paragon Corporation (UPC), they are mostly included within the Planning Area in order to provide comprehensive planning for—and ensure protection of—the Lagoon and public access to the entire Lagoon edge.

<sup>1</sup> Acreage was derived from the ALTA/ACSM Land Title Survey prepared by David Evans and Associates, Inc., October 2000; Sunquest Properties (Universal Paragon) Parcel survey prepared by Brian Kangas Foulk, September 1989; and the LUK 2006 ALTA for the Lagoon sub-area.

## 2.2 PLANNING AREA CHARACTER

Consistent with its historic and recent uses, the Planning Area has a disturbed, industrial character with low visual quality that is in significant contrast to its highly scenic setting on San Francisco Bay and in the shadow of San Bruno Mountain.

Existing development adjacent to the Planning Area is reflective of the area's industrial character and low visual quality. The north end of the Planning Area is bounded by the various waste collection, recycling, and distribution centers. The western edge is bordered by Bayshore Boulevard, while the busy U.S. 101 freeway corridor borders the Planning Area to the east. The former Southern Pacific railyard and the still active railroad tracks used by Caltrain commuter and Union Pacific freight trains travel north and south through the Planning Area. The Kinder Morgan Energy Partners, L.P. fuel storage facility (tank farm)—which occupies an out-parcel in the southwest portion of the site (i.e., it is not included in the Planning Area and not under ownership of UPC)—represents a particularly negative visual element from within the site as well as from Central Brisbane and other surrounding areas.

Physically, the area is largely undeveloped, comprising mainly disturbed areas that were formerly part of the San Francisco sanitary landfill. Since the landfill's closure in 1967, the area has been used as a repository for clean fill materials from construction sites in the region and for recycling of sand, dirt, gravel, and other construction materials. Over time, these activities, which are authorized under a permit from the City of Brisbane, have resulted in a somewhat variable topography (as a result of the constant movement of materials in and out of the site) with elevations that are on average 20 to 30 feet above the surrounding grades.



The drainage channel bisecting the eastern portion of the Baylands provides limited habitat.



The open areas in the eastern portion of the Baylands have been altered by fill operations.

These elevated grades not only provide an effective cap on the former landfill site, but also allow for dramatic views out from the site in all directions—to San Francisco Bay to the east, Visitacion Valley and McLaren Park to the northwest, San Bruno Mountain and Central Brisbane to the west and southwest, and Brisbane Lagoon to the south.

The continuous movement of fill material into and recycled materials out from the site has generally prevented the establishment of any significant vegetation. One key feature that remains despite the fill operations is the drainage channel that runs east-west through the center of the Planning Area. This drainage channel, which carries runoff from the Visitacion Creek watershed west of the site to the Bay, supports a narrow strip of wetland and riparian vegetation, and is held as an easement by the City of Brisbane.

The only existing development within the Planning Area includes two building supply businesses (Sierra Lumber and Van Arsdale-Harris) that are located in the northern portion. Both of these businesses are anticipated to be relocated to an alternate site in order to



This view from the City of Brisbane shows the fuel tanks and Ice House Hill in the foreground and downtown San Francisco in the background. Much of the Baylands is visible just beyond Ice House Hill and the tank farm.

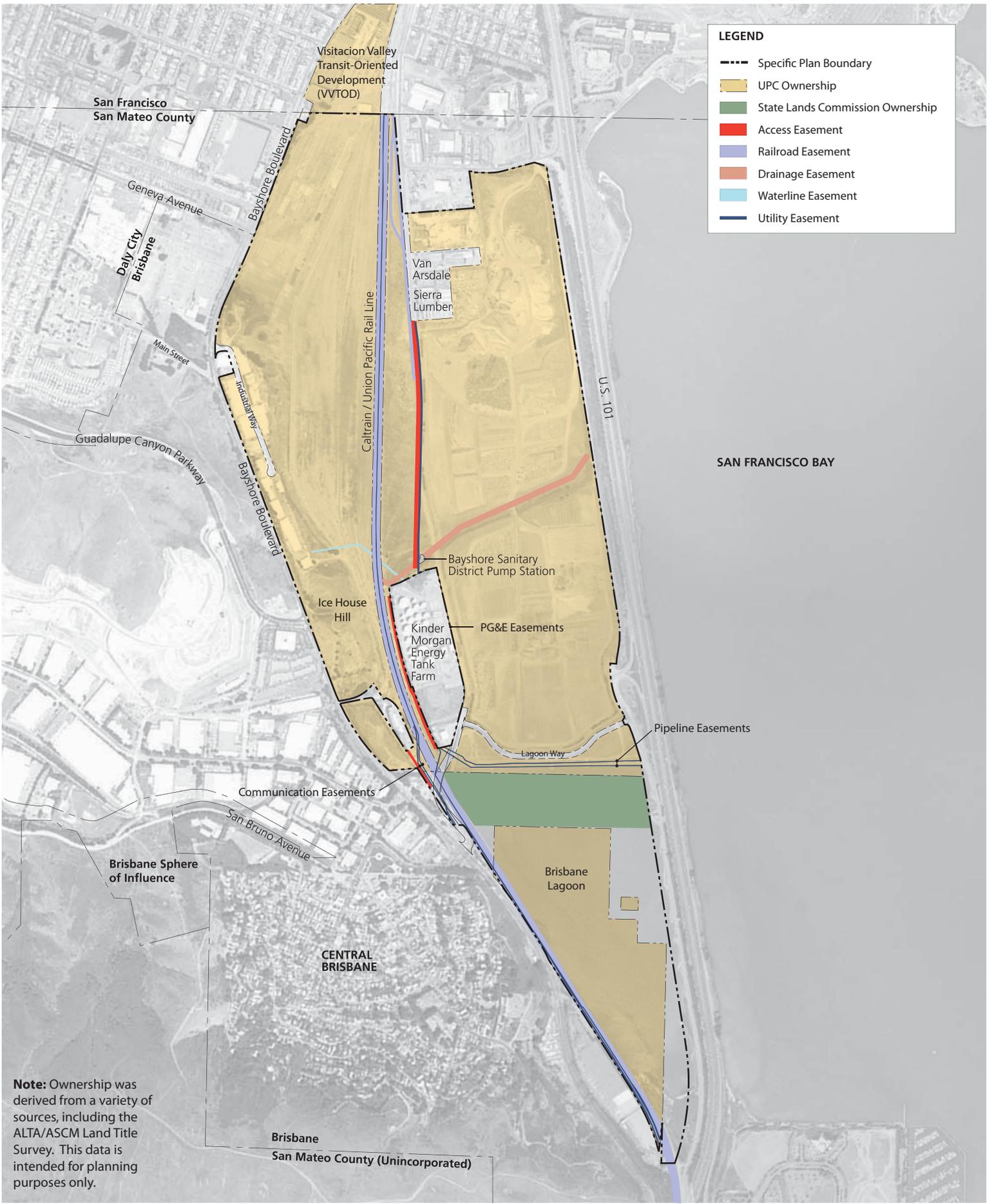
provide enhanced operations for both businesses, and contiguous development within the Planning Area. The proposed site for these two businesses is located between the railroad right-of-way and Tunnel Avenue, just south of its current location. While the Specific Plan generally accommodates the proposed relocation, the precise details regarding the relocation will be addressed in a separate application.

### 2.3 LAND OWNERSHIP

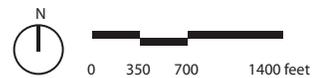
As illustrated in Figure 2.2, UPC owns the vast majority of the upland portion of the Specific Plan area and more than half of the Lagoon subarea. Areas enclosed by—but excluded from—the Specific Plan Area include the tank farm owned by Kinder Morgan Energy Partners (23.5 acres) and the Machinery & Equipment building parcel and former rail access south of Ice House Hill. These parcels are not part of the Specific Plan and are likely to maintain their current operations for the foreseeable future. The parcels on which Sierra Lumber and Van Arsdale-Harris Lumber operate total 8.6 acres and are located within the Specific Plan Area. The proposed new location for these businesses totals approximately 16 acres bounded by Tunnel Avenue, Visitacion Creek Park, and the Caltrain rail tracks. This proposed land swap will better integrate these viable uses into the overall plan for the area and enhance their operations. The proposed relocation and design of new facilities for these two businesses will be addressed in a separate application and will be subject to City approval.

In addition to its upland holdings, UPC owns a major portion of the Lagoon itself totaling approximately 75 acres, or 55 percent, of the Lagoon. UPC's upland and Lagoon properties are non-contiguous, separated by a 600-foot-wide strip of Lagoon property owned by the California State Lands Commission.

The City of Brisbane owns a 60-foot-wide right-of-way for Lagoon Way, crossing the southern end of the Planning Area between the freeway off-ramp and Tunnel Avenue. In addition, the Bayshore Sanitary District holds a 60-foot-wide access (“roadway”) easement that follows Tunnel Avenue south of the Sierra Lumber site and then veers west to access the pump station. Union Pacific holds a 30-foot-wide railroad right-of-way parallel and west of Tunnel Avenue near the Sierra Lumber and Van Arsdale-Harris sites. Caltrain operates on a 100-foot rail corridor easement, under ownership by the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (PCJPB). Several utilities easements travel under Tunnel Avenue and the Caltrain rail corridor. Additionally, communication easements travel southward along the western boundary of the Specific Plan Area south of the Kinder Morgan tank farm,



## 2.2 EXISTING LAND OWNERSHIP



and two 10-foot pipeline easements extend eastward from the southern base of the tank farm to the eastern edge of the Specific Plan area. Finally, a drainage easement follows the existing drainage channel and a waterline easement crosses the Baylands and terminates at the tank farm.

A number of existing City-owned rights-of-way are not under ownership by UPC, but are included in the Specific Plan area and recommendations. This includes in particular Industrial Way, an access road at the western boundary of the Planning Area at the intersection of Main Street. Improvements to the right-of-way will be negotiated through a separate approval and development process. As previously noted, the Sierra and Van Arsdale-Harris lumber businesses will likely relocate. Ownership transfers or “swapping” will be addressed in a separate application and will be subject to City approval.

Additionally, some improvements are suggested outside of the Planning Area and should be addressed as part of existing or proposed circulation elements separately by the City. These may be implemented through a collaborative process with the City of Brisbane in future planning efforts.