



Pacifica **Ocean Discovery** Center



Participate

Organize

Discover

Connect

Our mission is to create the Pacifica Ocean Discovery Center (PODC) as a top-of-mind branded destination, the nucleus for rewarding visitors with high value experiences — to **participate** in the unique history, resources, and challenges of the San Mateo Coast — to conveniently **organize** a vast array of interrelated activities and organizations offering opportunities to **discover** through immersive learning experiences – to **connect** with global communities providing solutions to build a better future.

Visitor Experience



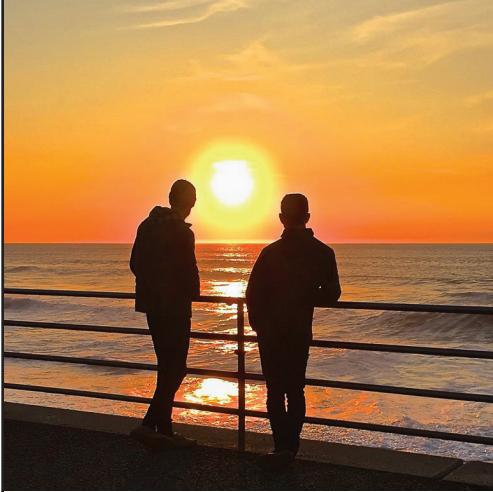
Participating in educational activities designed for visitors of all ages broadens their understanding of the unique marine life, shore life, geology, and the current issues and threats impacting The San Mateo Coastline.

Organizing, a wide array of available educational and recreational activities offered by local entities through a central location, the PODC efficiently maximizes the scope and quality of the experiences to participate in.

Discovering through immersive learning tools inside The Center's hands-on natural exhibits, augmented by topical media in mini-theaters delivered in 3-D format or virtual reality formats — then conveniently continue participation by moving outdoors into the nearby intertidal zone — or, guided coastal geology tours along the network of existing trails beginning just outside the front door — and, whale watching from the pier, beach, or cliffs.

Connecting eager minds to the significant resources and opportunities available for building a better future by uniting the varied interests of participating academic and civic organizations to institute holistic policies and practices for meeting the challenges of this coastal community — solutions that are transportable to similar communities nationwide and globally.

Current Vision



In 1998, a small group of Pacifica residents proposed to create a new aquarium on the site of the city's decommissioned sewage treatment plant. Twenty years later, the city is still looking for a proposal that can become real for the site.

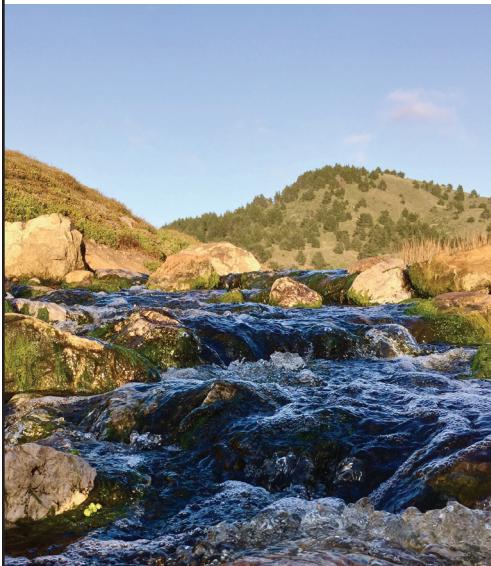
Now, people are turning their attention to the ocean as never before—especially communities along coastlines around the nation and world. Pacifica has been in the news as homes and apartment buildings fall to coastal erosion due in part to the effects of climate change and sea level rise. The City is currently writing its response plan to ocean changes, and it's clear from much of the conversation around this that residents are concerned and unclear on the issue.

We propose a new vision for an ocean education center at the Pacifica WTP site: a smaller, more program-based facility that leverages the best opportunities Pacifica offers. The Pacifica Ocean Discovery Center would focus on education through available research to implement policy responses surrounding the human relationship to the coast, in particular on climate change and attendant rising sea levels. It would make use of its matchless location by the pier, beach, seawalls, and headlands to showcase how a community can reshape its connection to the ocean.

We Envision



- **A center to study and teach about our relationship with the coast,** including coastal plants and animals, ocean responses to climate change, adaptation strategies for coastal communities, fishing and other recreation, and watershed connections to the sea.
- **A resource for citizens, cities, and teachers,** where individuals and cities can find useful information and where teachers can bring their students, access curriculum for their classes, and learn new ways to teach about the coastal environment.
- **An educational approach that utilizes engagement more than show-and-tell,** rich in program offerings that get people out onto the beach and pier to learn first-hand via inquiry and projects, and that help them solve problems and engage personally.
- **A facility centered in a building with aquarium tanks and other exhibits focused on the local coastal environment,** for orientation to educational programs utilizing the coast and watershed as a classroom.
- **A research program that leverages citizen involvement,** building on the enthusiasm evident in existing volunteer programs, to run long-term monitoring programs, habitat restoration, and other efforts.
- **Deep connections with related organizations in the community,** such as local schools, the Pacifica Beach Coalition, Marine Mammal Center, Surfrider, the Historical Society, and arts organizations, to serve a diverse audience.
- **A sustainable, adaptable organization** that invests more in people than infrastructure and can adjust quickly to community needs and desires and to economic realities.



Destination



Pacifica, CA is a unique community of thirty-nine thousand predominately conservation-minded residents, nestled within the boundaries of four significant environmental features — the Golden Gate National Recreation Area running along the San Andreas Fault to the east and north, where the Pacific Tectonic Plate goes out to sea at Mussel Rock — Montara Mountain and Devil's Slide mark the southern tip — the entire eastern edge defined by the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary shoreline. There is tremendous community support for a center-point to focus our community efforts and attract like-minded visitors.



Pacifica is the most accessible community on the Northern California Coast. Building the Pacifica Ocean Discovery Center as a stand-alone branded center-point would create a very attractive destination for the two fastest growing sectors of the travel industry — family vacations, and international eco/edutourism. Incorporating the PODC into a complex providing lecture and meeting space, provides a competitive destination for academic/civic conferences, scholastic discovery events, and conservation activism. This complimentary mix of visitor profiles would greatly enhance the year-round economic activity of Pacifica as a whole. Vacations are typically scheduled from June through September, while the majority of conferences are booked in the months between November and May.

The PODC would provide a symbolic and operational hub for connecting the myriad of existing educational and recreational activities within close proximity along the San Mateo Coast.

Existing Educational Activities

Marine life in the intertidal zone; Geology tours on connected hiking and biking trails; Birding; Whale watching from shore or tours out of Pillar Point Harbor; Habitat restoration efforts; The Calera Creek Water Recycling Plant; The San Pedro and Calera Creek watersheds; Shelldance Orchid Nursery.

Existing Recreational Activities

Surfing, Surfing Lessons; Fishing and crabbing off the pier and beach; Inshore/offshore sport fishing; Ocean kayaking and kayaking lessons; Coastal marathon runs; Scuba diving lessons; Paragliding; Horseback Riding; And of course, the beach.

Finance Model



Soliciting donations from private and nonprofit organizations would initially fund the development and construction of the PODC. Operating revenues will be generated through a base admission fee for exhibits, ongoing donations, fundraising events, rental of the facility for private events, admission fees from sponsorship of topical lectures, on-site merchandise sales, and a gallery featuring local artists' works for sale. It may also be appropriate for independent businesses such as foodservice, lodging, or conference facilities to be assigned a contribution to the PODC operating expenses.

Available assets at the Beach Boulevard WTP site include an established pipeline route to the ocean and potential modification of the pumping mechanisms for saltwater circulation through tide pool exhibits. Simple, sustainable and cost effective framed glass open atrium construction would be the desirable method for enclosing the PODC space. Possible innovative strategies for cost effectively maintaining relevance over time might include rental of, or participation in nonprofit loaner programs for mini-theater content delivered in 3-D or, for example, virtual reality viewed inside facsimiles of deep-sea diving 'bell' helmets and modified scuba masks.



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