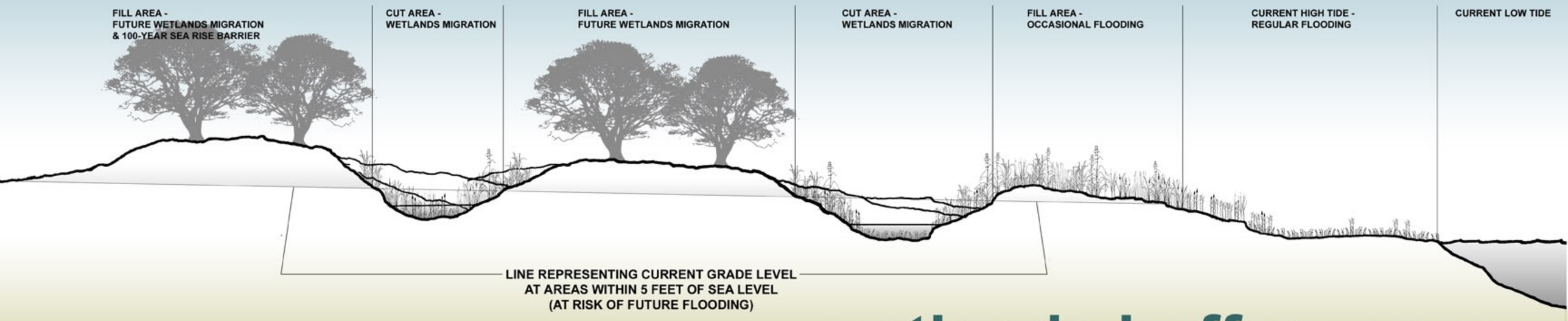
the sustainable way to a *Better Bay...*

opportunities for improvement of the bay area generated by the threat of sea level change

The prospect of rising sea level could be a dreadful one, considering the risks to urban waterfront areas such as the San Francisco Bay. The ***Better Bay Solution*** is to create new opportunities to improve the bay while protecting the surrounding area from sea level rise. Heavy-handed solutions to the problem of sea level rise could be broad & sweeping, in ways that could permanently damage our sacred ecologies and historic cities. When we discuss how to address sea level, we should ask how we can simultaneously improve the impacted areas.

When we attempt to control the water in the bay, **can we also improve the ecology that we've damaged in the past?**
When we guard our cities from the rising tides, **can we also make them better places?**

The ideas shown below are examples of how the bay and its communities can be improved in the course of dealing with rising sea level...



wetlands buffer zones

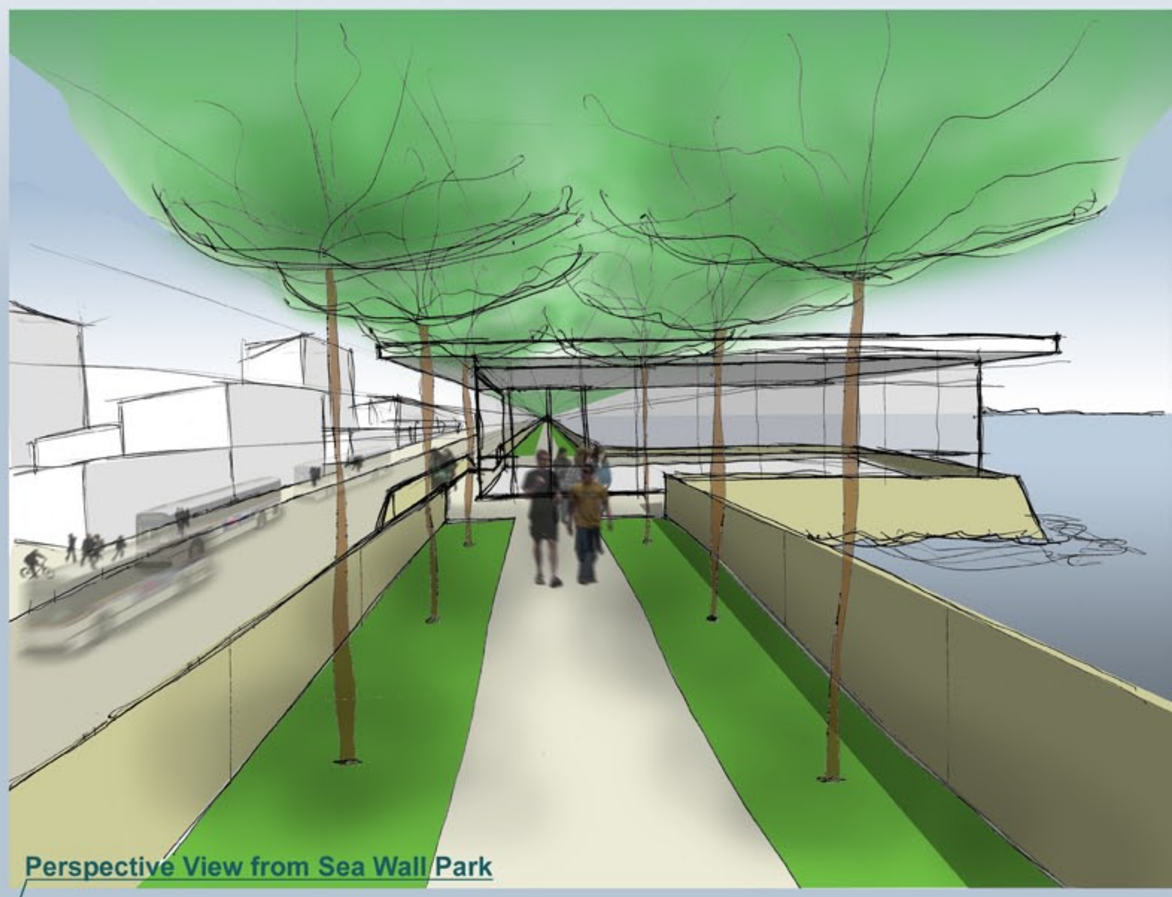
Protection of coastal areas from the sea has been achieved by various types of man-made interventions such as dams and dikes. Before the modern habitation of San Francisco Bay, this was achieved naturally by wetlands. Wetlands are proven to absorb fluctuations in water levels, while providing a unique and critical habitat for many species. By providing a wetlands buffer zone around the perimeter of the bay, our communities can prevent future flooding, restore a critical element of our ecology, and gain a new outdoor setting for the enjoyment of all.
In the scheme shown above, a low-lying area at the edge on the shore is threatened by rising sea level. The wetlands buffer zone is graded to provide high and low areas. The high areas provide shelter for the community against flooding, and the low areas provide opportunities for wetlands habitat migration. As sea level rises, the wetlands can adjust and serve a role in protection against flooding.

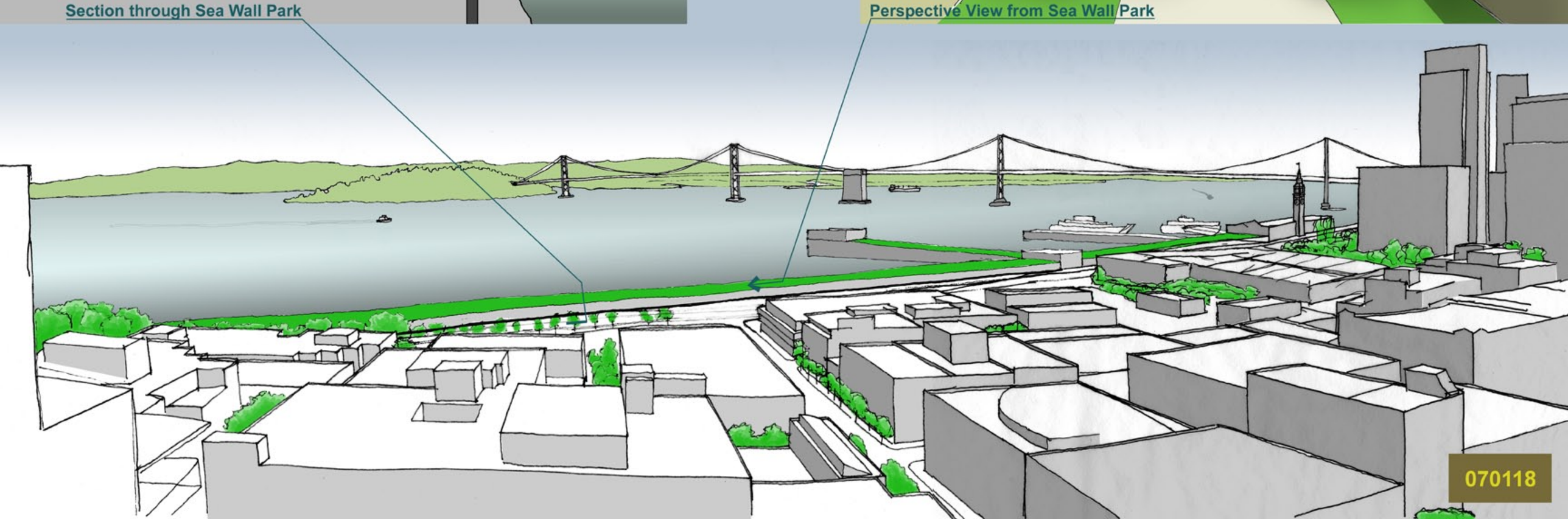
sea wall parks

In historic urban areas that have been extensively landfilled, protection of the coast will take on a different form. A durable barrier capable of protecting our historic cities will be needed in locations where a wetlands buffer is unfeasible. It would be easy enough to propose a dike that would hold off the sea and close off the city, but how could the same wall be used to make the city a better place?

In these images, the Sea Wall is depicted as an urban park along the Embarcadero. Sea Wall Park would provide enjoyment and uninterupted views for all. Structures throughout the extent of the park (shown to the right) can be used to control access and to provide additional recreation or retail opportunities. The design of the wall is also intended to provide redundancy immediately following an earthquake. The fill material between the pair of rigid walls may provide continued flood protection after the walls have been compromised.

Section through Sea Wall Park


Perspective View from Sea Wall Park



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