

Billion Dollar Facelift Would Change San Diego's Bayfront

Seaport Village would be razed, rebuilt and expanded, if Port Commissioners approve

By Paul Krueger

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Seaport Village may see a \$1 billion redevelopment plan in its future. NBC 7's Monica Dean has more on what this could mean. (Published Tuesday, Nov. 6, 2018)

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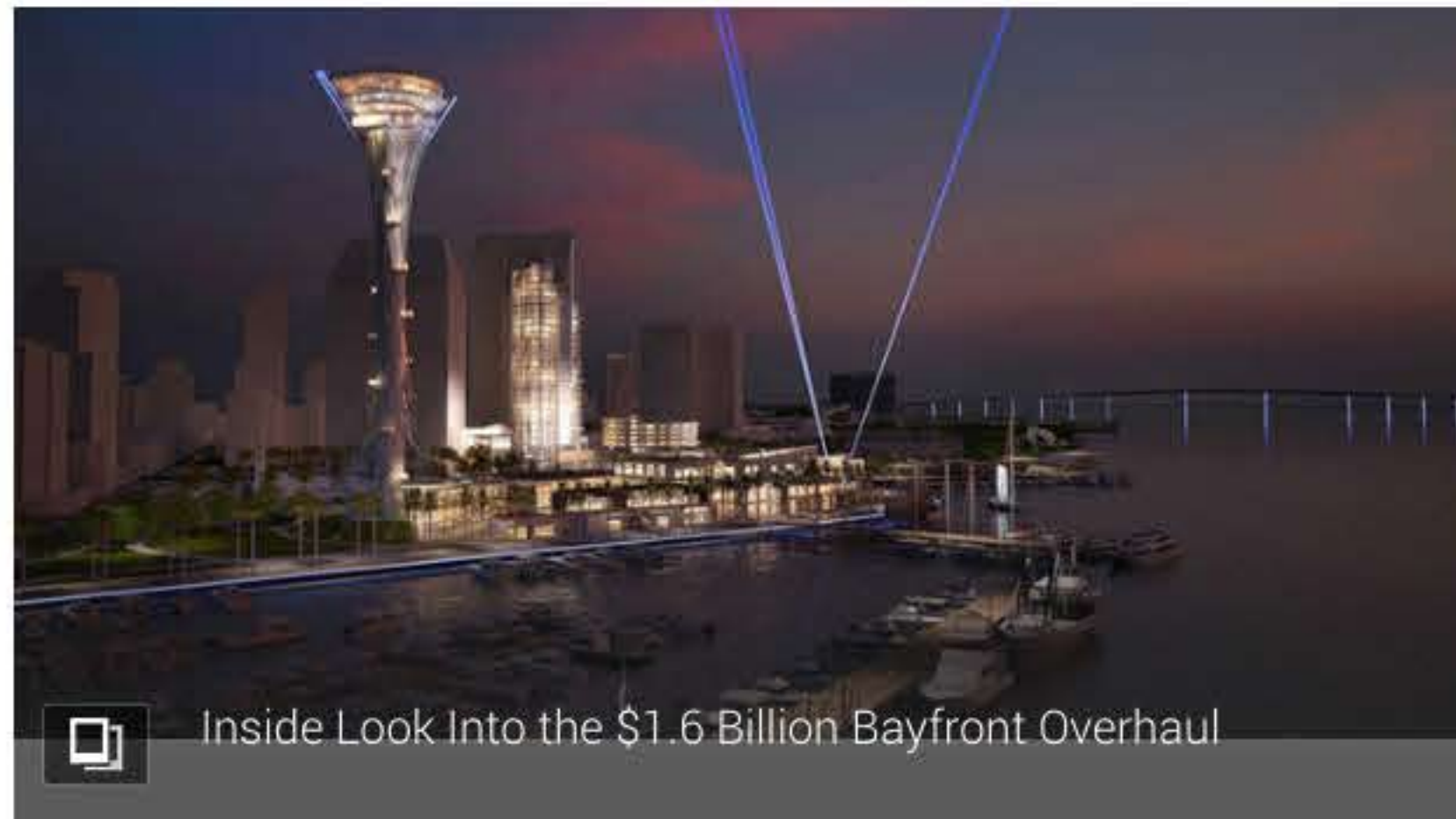
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A stunning makeover is in the works for San Diego's downtown waterfront.

The proposed \$1.6 billion project would replace Seaport Village, a popular but aging collection of bayfront shops and restaurants along Harbor Drive.

Developer Yehudi Gaffen and his partners proposed a complete teardown and rebuild of Seaport Village.

It would also have a vast extension of the existing property to encompass 70 acres of land and water. This would span from north of the Midway Museum down to the area around Embarcadero Park.



Inside Look Into the \$1.6 Billion Bayfront Overhaul

Gaffen presented his latest version of "Seaport San Diego" at a San Diego Unified Port Commission meeting Tuesday.

Highlights of the project include 10 acres of open space, a water element that extends north towards Harbor Drive, creating a water play area and a canal-like walkway through a portion of the development.

If approved by port commissioners, Seaport San Diego would include five hotels at different price points, restaurants, retail and office spaces, an aquarium, and an observation tower.

"So, it's a place that's memorable, that's unique, that has authentic San Diego stores and food offerings, that you can partake of only in San Diego," Gaffen told NBC 7.

Renderings of the project also show a Veterans' Museum and park and a commercial fish processing plant near the Midway Museum.

But the huge scale of the project worries owners of the Fish Market, a very popular restaurant on the G Street "Mole."

"The 75,000 square foot [Veterans'] museum was a bit of a surprise," said Dwight Colton, a Fish Market executive.

Colton said there's not sufficient parking in the area and predicted that traffic generated by the new project will cause constant gridlock on Harbor Drive and Market Street, neither of which can be widened.

"We don't see any way that all three buildings could co-exist on G Street," Colton said.

But one downtown resident told port commissioners that Seaport San Diego will energize the bayfront.

"It's not just a bunch of hotels or just a bunch of shops," said Alex Rolek. "You've got a lot of things coming together to activate this one space, and I think that's where it's really successful."

The developer understands some people will miss the laid-back feel at Seaport Village.

He promises to incorporate Seaport's most endearing features, including the duck ponds, carousel, and appeal of small shops.

But Gaffen said Seaport Village can't last forever.

"We can't leave it like it is, because it's falling down. Sea level rise will ultimately flood it," said Gaffen. "So there's no way it can stay as it is."

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