



THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE PROJECT REFERENCE FILE



Bob Swanson

The building exteriors feature clay barrel-tile roofs, wooden eave brackets, and copper downspouts. On the concrete-plaster stucco facades—painted crimson and ochre—are upper-level terraces, balconies and bay windows, and flowerboxes.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Delancey Street Embarcadero Triangle is the self-built and self-managed home and workplace for San Francisco's Delancey Street Foundation. Delancey Street is a unique community of former members of "America's permanent underclass"—hard-core substance abusers, criminals, unemployable welfare recipients, homeless people, and unskilled and/or functionally illiterate individuals—determined to change and improve their lives. The complex was built primarily by community residents using donated materials; no public funding was involved.

Founded in San Francisco in 1971, the Delancey Street Foundation is named for the street on Manhattan's Lower East Side where European immigrants banded together at the turn of the century to support each other and learn how to enter the mainstream of American society. Today—with some 800 residents in five locations around the country and with thousands of graduates leading successful, law-abiding, and drug-free lives—the foundation

is widely respected as a most unusual and signally successful residential self-help program of education and treatment.

Delancey Street uses the concepts of self-reliance, commitment, and hard work to help its residents develop and improve academic, vocational, interpersonal, and social skills while they rebuild the self-esteem they need to lead successful and rewarding lives in society's mainstream. The community lives and functions as an extended family does; members take responsibility for each other and pool their energies and resources. Delancey Street prides itself on having no outside professional staff and providing all food, clothing, shelter, education, vocational training, therapy, and recreation at no cost to residents or taxpayers.

During the average four-year stay, a resident receives a high-school equivalency education and is trained in at least three marketable skills before graduating. The community currently runs a wide range of training options to provide residents with vocational experience. Some, such as a moving and trucking company, a printing operation, a catering ser-



DELANCEY STREET EMBARCADERO TRIANGLE SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

PROJECT TYPE

A four-story, 336,700-square-foot, mixed-use complex on a triangular waterfront site in a redeveloping urban area. Five buildings surround a central courtyard containing a 500-seat multipurpose meeting room, a 150-seat screening room, and a swimming pool and spa. On the ground level, the buildings contain 54,400 square feet of commercial space, including a 200-seat restaurant and a health club. Upper levels contain 177 dwelling units, central dining facilities for 400, and recreation areas for residents. A 179-space parking garage and an auto service facility are located under the central courtyard.

SPECIAL FEATURES

- Housing over retail
- Contextual design
- Flexible commercial space
- Urban redevelopment site
- Handcrafted decorative elements

OWNER/DEVELOPER

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JULY-SEPTEMBER 1992



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Inside handcrafted wrought-iron gates, the main entrance to the central courtyard is flanked by a reception area and a residential lobby.

vice, and a restaurant, generate income that supports the foundation's work. Others, such as a paratransit service, an accounting operation, and an automotive maintenance center, provide direct support for the functional and administrative needs of the community.

The Delancey Street Embarcadero Triangle is currently home to Delancey Street's approximately 350 San Francisco residents. It can accommodate a maximum of 700 residents in 177 studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom apartments, which are assigned on the basis of seniority. Residents share central dining and recreational facilities, including a social room, library, multipurpose meeting room, and swimming pool and spa. The Triangle also contains 54,400 square feet of commercial space, nearly two-thirds of which is leasable.

THE SITE

On the waterfront in San Francisco's South Beach neighborhood, a redeveloping area within walking distance of the business district, the 2.95-acre site is an irregularly shaped triangular block bounded by the Embarcadero, Brannan Street, and First Street. Adjacent blocks contain a mix of market-rate housing, commercial and industrial activities, and vacant land.

The parcel is owned by the Port of San Francisco, leased to the city's redevelopment agency, and subleased to Delancey Street for a term of 66 years. City redevelopment

plans designated the block for low-income housing, which did not generate the interest of conventional developers. Delancey Street, looking for a location to centralize and expand its local operations, became interested in the site in 1984. At the time, its businesses and residents were housed in several locations around the city.

Although the city had master-planned the site for housing, the land was zoned for maritime use, and guidelines set by the state land commission prevented the port from allowing nonmaritime uses. The state legislature passed special legislation to exempt the project from the commission guidelines and from tidelands rules. Approvals had been delayed for other reasons, too: The area was under study as the site for a new ballpark, and the Delancey Street project was also the first to come up for review under a new city law requiring development sites to be tested for contaminants.

Before the lease was granted, Delancey Street had to obtain approvals from surrounding landowners. The developers of the adjacent, upscale apartment projects objected until Mimi Silbert, Delancey Street's president/CEO and a PhD in both criminology and psychology, presented compelling evidence that the Delancey community had a better record than conventional residential uses: Not only has there never been an arrest or violent incident on any of its premises, but also its residents are guar-

anteed to be drug-, alcohol-, and crime-free.

PLANNING/DESIGN

While negotiations for the site were underway, the community realized that it would require professional assistance with planning and design. Following an exhaustive search, Silbert recruited Howard Backen of Backen Arrigoni & Ross, a well-respected San Francisco-based firm with a broad range of experience. The assignment took seven years, including four on a pro bono basis. To gain insight into the community's unique requirements, Backen methodically studied its operations, visited its existing facilities, and met with residents.

From the start, the concept for the facility was to create a high-quality, noninstitutional environment that would foster personal dignity and community pride. As plans took shape, Silbert and Backen were careful to size and detail the facility for no more than the number of residents that could comfortably be housed on the site. During the design process, Backen led residents on tours around the city to illustrate alternatives. Invariably, residents preferred classic, traditional styles and details to modern ones, which were often grim reminders of the correctional facilities where some had served their sentences.

With its rich materials and many distinctive handcrafted features, the complex does not fit the stereotype



Bob Swanson

At the ground level, the central courtyard provides access to flexible spaces that serve as workplaces, storage facilities, and clothing and book exchanges for residents.



Bob Swanson

Streetfronts, which at first glance appear to be rows of smaller buildings, reflect the character and integrity of the city's rich architectural heritage.

of low-income housing. If sold as condominiums, the units would probably fetch more than \$350,000 each. In fact, the complex was intentionally designed with enough flexibility to permit conversion to market-rate uses. For example, a storage room in each unit contains the plumbing necessary to install a kitchen.

FINANCING

Once the plans had been completed and approved by the city building department, the foundation sent

them out to several general contractors for bid. The bids received ranged from \$27 million to \$30 million. Delancey Street reckoned that, using in-house labor and donated goods and services, it could build the facility for less than half that amount.

Financing for construction, however, proved difficult to obtain. Delancey Street was unwilling to put the project up as collateral and had a limited credit history. To start construction, it tapped \$4.5 million in equity from the sale of two buildings it owned in the Richmond

neighborhood and in Pacific Heights that had appreciated handsomely over the years. It calculated that somewhere between \$5 million and \$10 million in construction financing was needed. During the first six months of construction, six or seven community-based banks sent back rejection slips because little about the project fit their lending requirements. Fortunately, the Bank of America heard about the project's plight and came to the rescue in June 1988, offering a nontraditional, custom-designed, unsecured line of credit for \$10 million.

Using in-house labor with donated materials and professional services, construction came to approximately \$14 million. Of this amount, roughly \$7 million was raised from the sale of buildings, collected earnings, and \$2.5 million in savings, while an additional \$1 million was obtained from one-time grants. The remaining \$6 million, borrowed from the Bank of America, was paid back ahead of schedule using some \$1 million of donations, \$2 million from the city's affordable housing trust fund, and the remainder from foundation earnings.

CONSTRUCTION

Construction—which is of wood-frame over post-tension deck, sheathed in concrete plaster—was begun in October 1987 and completed by January 1991. Working with



Douglas Dun

Reliance on donated construction materials called for considerable discipline. For example, the paving pattern on the podium level was custom-designed to make the best use of the tiles that became available.

PROJECT DATA

LAND USE INFORMATION

Site Area: 128,000 square feet (2.95 acres)
 Total Dwelling Units: 177
 Gross Density: 60 units per acre
 Gross Building Area: 336,700 square feet
 Residential: 259,700 square feet
 Commercial: 54,400 square feet
 Retail: 45,400 square feet
 Restaurant: 7,800 square feet
 Health club: 1,200 square feet
 Community facilities: 22,600
 Recreation center: 7,800 square feet
 Multipurpose meeting room: 4,000 square feet
 Screening room: 2,600 square feet
 Pool/spa pavilion: 1,200 square feet
 Central residential dining area: 7,800 square feet
 Central residential recreation area: 7,000 square feet
 Gross Leasable Area (retail): 36,450 square feet
 Total Parking Spaces: 179
 Number of Stories: 4

RESIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Unit Type	Typical Floor Area (Square Feet)	Number Built
Studio/1 bath	551	44
Studio/2 bath	868	29
1-bedroom/1-bath	868	7
1-bedroom/2-bath	868	22
2-bedroom/2-bath	870	75

DEVELOPMENT COST INFORMATION¹

	Actual Cost Of Purchased Goods and Services	Estimated Value Of Donated Goods and Services ²	Total
Site Improvement Costs	\$ 0.50	\$ 0.50	\$ 1.00
Hard Construction Costs	12.00	13.00	25.00
Furnishing Costs	0.25	1.50	1.75
Soft Costs	1.25	1.00	2.25
Total Development Cost	\$ 14.00	\$ 16.00	\$ 30.00

Notes:

¹Dollar figures in millions.

²Including in-house labor.

Apersey Construction as general contractor and assisted by members of the San Francisco Building Trades Council, residents provided nearly 80 percent of the labor and all of the ancillary support, including accounting, dealing with subcontractors, and ordering all products and materials.

The effort was an unprecedented experience in vocational training, helping more than 250 formerly unemployable adults acquire skills in the building trades and related services. The state's department of vocational rehabilitation put a number of residents through school to obtain contractors' licenses to go hand-in-hand with their practical training, and several graduates are now running their own construction companies.

More than 3,000 businesses and individuals donated time, money,

and materials to the project. Manufacturers and distributors from around the United States were asked to provide needed products. The design changed many times during construction, depending on which materials were available. Sometimes, materials were rejected to ensure consistency on the project's exterior, but everyone learned to improvise and make adjustments on the interiors; for example, every bathroom has different fixtures from the one next door.

Residents took great pride in their work, and quality craftsmanship is found throughout. Walls were totally rebuilt if they were not perfectly straight; custom-designed stained-glass windows were made in the residents' glass shop; residents even fabricated their own steel, first building a shop and all the equipment in it.

DEVELOPMENT SCHEDULE

Planning Started: September 1984
Site Leased: September 1987
Construction Started: October 1987
Project Completed: January 1991

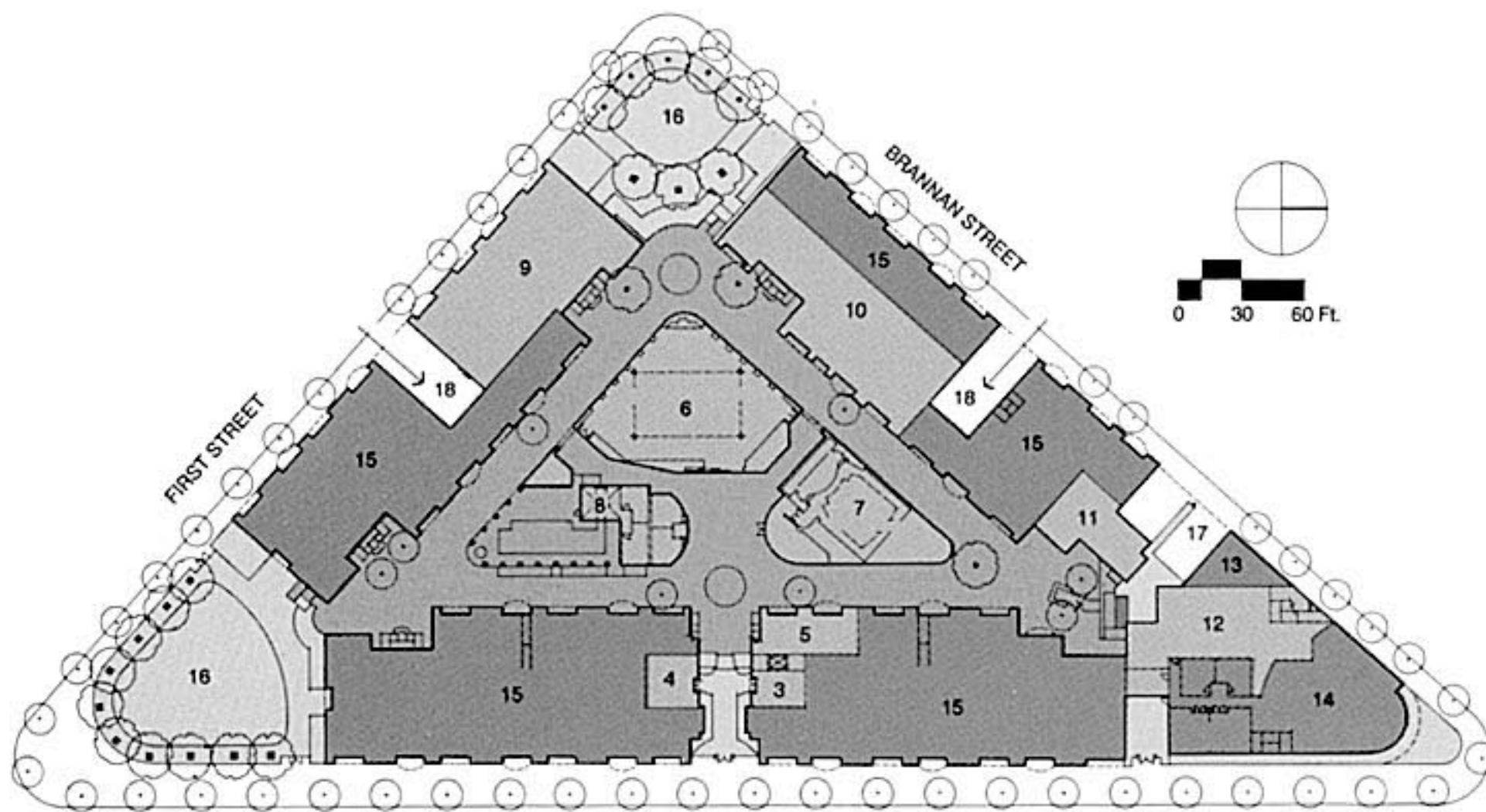
DIRECTIONS

From San Francisco International Airport: Follow Highway 101 north for approximately nine miles. Before crossing the Bay Bridge, exit at Bryant Street. Proceed east on Bryant Street for about four blocks, and turn right onto Beale Street. Follow Beale one block south to the Embarcadero. The Delancey Street Embarcadero Triangle is located immediately to the right, on the block bounded by the Embarcadero, Brannan Street, and Delancey (formerly First) Street. The main entrance is at 600 Embarcadero.

Driving Time: Approximately 15 minutes.

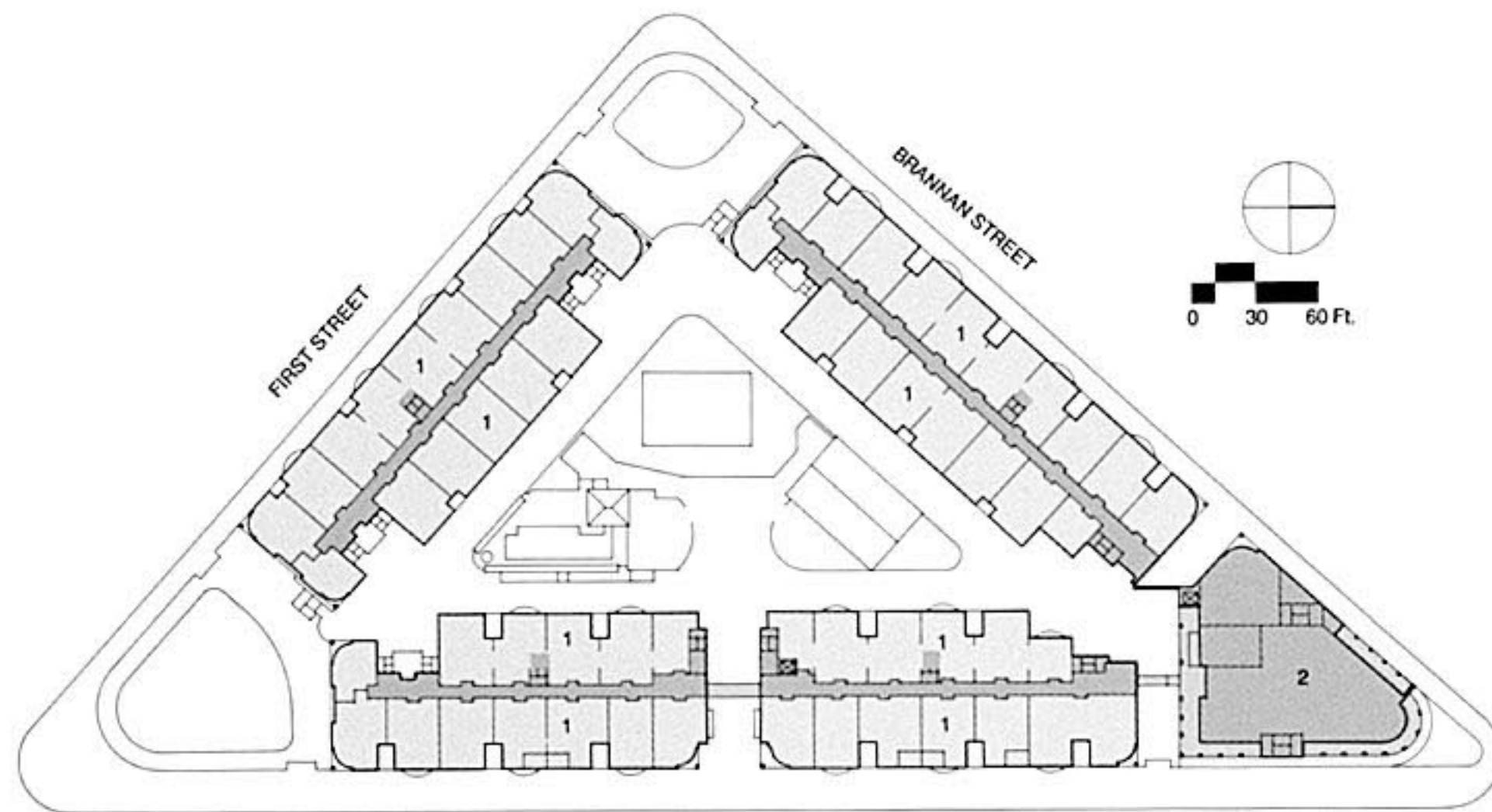
Key:

- 1 Residential
- 2 Resident Dining/Recreation Area
- 3 Residential Lobby
- 4 Reception
- 5 Mail Room
- 6 Multipurpose Room
- 7 Screening Room
- 8 Pool/Spa
- 9 Health Club
- 10 Auto Service (below)
- 11 Storage
- 12 Kitchen
- 13 Delicatessen
- 14 Restaurant
- 15 Retail/Commercial
- 16 Garden
- 17 Service Area
- 18 Ramp down to Parking
- 19 Parking



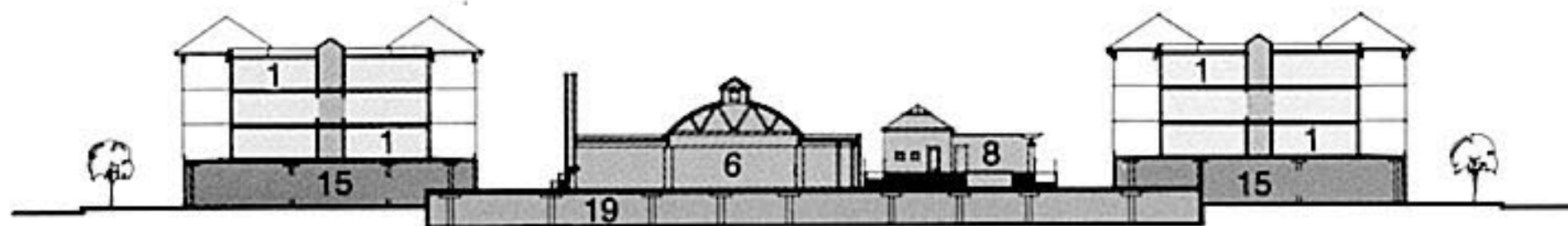
Podium Level

THE EMBARCADERO



Upper Level

THE EMBARCADERO



Section

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PROJECT REFERENCE FILE is published quarterly and is intended as a resource tool for use by its subscribers in improving the quality of future projects. Data contained herein were made available by the development team and constitute a report on, not an endorsement of, the project by ULI-the Urban Land Institute.

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 625 Indiana Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20004-2930

Subscriptions are available at \$70 per year for ULI members, \$85 per year for nonmembers. Single issues are available at \$4 each to PRF subscribers; \$10.50 each to nonsubscribers. ISSN 0364-2925

METRIC CONVERSIONS

meters = feet x 0.305

kilometers = miles x 1.609

square meters = sq. ft. x 0.093

hectares = acres x 0.405

(1 hectare = 10,000 square meters)