

From: [Maxwell Brodie](#)
To: [CityCouncil-List](#)
Cc: [Jennifer Ott](#); [Allen Tai](#); [Brian McGuire](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rain support for Agenda 7A - Natel Hydraulic Test Facility
Date: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 6:20:19 PM
Attachments: [Natel Support Letter - Rain.pdf](#)

Dear Mayor Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft and Members of Council,

As neighbors of Natel Energy, we are deeply familiar with their impactful work. I write to convey our unequivocal support for a permit to expand their testing facility.

My full support accompanying rationale is attached.

Wishing everyone a productive evening,
-Max

--

Maxwell Brodie
CEO
[Rain.aero](#)



Maxwell Brodie
CEO and Founder, Rain
2175 Monarch Street
Alameda, CA

Rain

City Council of Alameda
City Hall, 2263 Santa Clara Avenue
Council Chambers, 3rd Floor
Alameda, CA 94501

Dear City Council Members,

I would like to convey my support for Natel Energy's permit application coming before Council on Tuesday June 4. Natel and Rain share a common ethos as mission-driven organizations developing innovative solutions in the face of climate change, and this ethos is deeply woven into the fabric of the Alameda Point community that we are proud to be a part of. The groundbreaking work being done by Natel and other like-minded small businesses aligns well with the City of Alameda's vision of a Point enriched by one-of-a-kind parks, commerce, and technology.

The ability to test is core to innovation. The more novel a technology is, the more critical testing is for both technology development and demonstration. Natel has impressively developed their own turbine hydraulic test laboratory here in Alameda, which—once the expansions subject to the permit application are complete—will be the only U.S.-owned laboratory compliant with international testing standards. This facility is something for Alameda to be deeply proud of and I look forward to seeing the business it brings and the science it continues to produce.

The city of Alameda has been successful in attracting industry-leading technology companies by offering the strengths of community, schools, housing, public transit and bikeability, top local talent, and unique facilities well suited to R&D. I strongly

support the Planning Board in continuing to encourage this type of growth in approving Natel's request to expand their outdoor testing facility.

Sincerely,

Maxwell Brodie

From: [Ruth Abbe](#)
To: [Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft](#); [Tony Daysog](#); [Malia Vella](#); [Tracy Jensen](#); [Trish Spencer](#)
Cc: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] CASA Letter re: Agenda Item 7-A Support for Natel Energy Hydraulic Test Facility
Date: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 4:57:52 PM
Attachments: [CASA letter Natel Energy 6-4-24.pdf](#)

Please see our letter attached regarding Agenda Item 7-A Support for Natel Energy Hydraulic Test Facility. Best, Ruth 415-235-1356



June 4, 2024

Mayor Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Vice Mayor Tony Daysog
Councilmember Tracy Jensen
Councilmember Trish Herrera Spencer
Councilmember Malia Vella

RE: Agenda Item 7-A Support for Natel Energy Hydraulic Test Facility

Dear Members of the City Council:

Community Action for a Sustainable Alameda (CASA) is a community-wide coalition dedicated to raising awareness, mobilizing community action, and facilitating the implementation of the City's Climate Action and Resiliency Plan and more generally to increase community sustainability and well-being.

We are thrilled that Alameda Point has been the destination for so many green tech companies, including Natel Energy.

We are writing to support the Natel Energy Hydraulic Test Facility.

- Natel is tackling two key crises: climate change and biodiversity loss.
- We need a reliable renewable energy grid, and hydropower is part of the solution.
- But we also need climate solutions that address biodiversity loss.
- Natel conducts meaningful scientific research that is advancing what is possible in hydropower while preserving biodiversity.

As an island city, Alameda is uniquely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. We need to invest in those solutions and providing a long-term support to Natel Energy is part of that solution.

We understand that the project meets the City's Zoning requirements and the lease agreements of its neighbors. While we heartily support the tourism and quality of life provided by the tenants of Spirits Alley, we must balance those interests with an investment in our future.

We encourage the City Council to support the Planning Board's approval of the Energy Hydraulic Test Facility.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ruth Abbe".

Ruth Abbe, Steering Committee
Community Action for a Sustainable Alameda

From: [Shelby S](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] For tonights Coucnil Meeting--Natel item 7A
Date: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 3:40:49 PM

Councilmembers-

I see the developers came out in support of Natel's illegal outdoor operations because they support hydropower etc. However, Council should take notice that whether Natel is a "good" company, or a "Bad" company is irrelevant. The only thing that is relevant is whether or not they are following the applicable land use and other regulations.

They are not.

1. This Project REQUIRES a Certificate of Approval. Pursuant to AMC 113-21.5(b)4, Planning staff MUST refer the matter to the Historical Advisory Board. The Planning Board doesnt even have jurisdiction and therefore could not "Approve "the Project--City Co8ucnil also cannot approve the Project without first referring it to the Historical Advisory Board for a Certificate of Approval see below:

Pursuant to AMC 13-21.5:

AMC 13-21.5 - Procedure for Preservation of Historical and Cultural Monuments.

a. Permit Restrictions; Notification to Board of Request. No building, structure, group of structures, or site, including trees or plantings, that has been designated a Historical Monument shall be demolished, removed or altered without first referring the matter to the Historical Advisory Board for a certificate of approval...

b. Certificate of Approval.

1. Alterations. The Historical Advisory Board shall determine whether to issue a certificate of approval for repairs and alterations of Historical Monuments, with or without conditions of approval, based on whether plans and specifications meet the standards established by the Historical Advisory Board and the Secretary of the Interior's standards and guidelines for rehabilitation of historic buildings...

and...

4. Applications for any permit to demolish, alter or remove Historical Monuments shall be submitted to the Planning and Building Department and referred to the Historical Advisory Board for consideration...

2. This Project requires CEQA review. IT IS NOT EXEMPT. No Projects at Alameda Point are CEQA exempt. A Project level review is REQUIRED. I will keep telling you this but you will still ignore me, I know. It needs to be evaluated for impacts to endangered species (outdoor equipment/over 4 feet in height), blocking public access to the shoreline, violations of the Alameda Zoning code and Alameda Point EIR, and nonconformance with the Historic Preservation Ordinance... at a minimum. It fails on all counts.

3. This Project doesnt even have a permit for the current illegal operations. I would say you should revoke the current permit--but they dont have one. Now, obviously City staff colluded with Natel to "look the other way" for a number of years, so the City cannot fine them, but the City CAN AND SHOULD order them to immediately cease and desist the operations--not allow them to make it even worse. The Alameda Municipal Code,

General Plan and Alameda Point EIR **reserve the Hangars areas for customer serving uses expressly to preserve and protect public access to the shoreline. This requirement aligns with the Public Trust Doctrine and the California Coastal Act and blocking access is a violation of state- not just local- law.**

4. This Project is NOT a "Building Extension". By definition, A **building extension, extension** is a room or set of rooms built onto a house or similar building after initial construction has been completed. -- saying that it is shows the lengths City staff will take to "help" illegal activities to continue to violate the law. The proposed Project involves operation of **outdoor equipment--therefore, not a building extension.** The only things allowed outdoor in Zone "E" over 4 feet are are shrubs (6 feet), trees (sparse, under 20 feet), and a lightpole (20 feet with anti-perching)

Council should be outraged that these violations have gone on for so long, not approving them.

--

Shelby
510-435-9263

From: [Tod Hickman](#)
To: [Lara Weisiger](#); [City Clerk](#); [Malia Vella](#); [Tracy Jensen](#); [Trish Spencer](#); [Tony Daysog](#); [Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft](#); [Jennifer Ott](#); [Abby Thorne-Lyman](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment attachment #2 for Item 7-A June 4th, 2024.
Date: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 2:53:33 PM
Attachments: [IMG_2806.PNG](#)

Attachment #2 for our public correspondence/comment June 4th, 2024 Item 7-A Natel illegal structures in view corridor undermining the value of Steeltown Winery LLC lease with City of Alameda.





Sent from my iPhone

From: [Tod Hickman](#)
To: [Lara Weisiger](#); [City Clerk](#); [Jennifer Ott](#); [Abby Thorne-Lyman](#); [Malia Vella](#); [Tracy Jensen](#); [Tony Davsog](#); [Trish Spencer](#); [Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Memo from City Manager to City Council Regarding pproving a Lease and Authorizing the City Manager to Negotiate and Execute Documents Necessary to Implement the Terms of a Lease with Steeltown Winery LLC, September 16, 2014 | Alameda Point Info
Date: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 12:13:29 PM

For public comment on item 7-A June 4, 2024

https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__alamedapointinfo.com_documents_memo-2Dcity-2Dmanager-2Dcity-2Dcouncil-2Dregarding-2Dpproving-2Dlease-2Dand-2Dauthorizing-2Dcity-2Dmanager&d=DwIFAg&c=euGZstcaTDllvimEN8b7jXrwqOf-v5A_CdpgnVfiiMM&r=p6nGt75xaJteem6TbT5cz1zYQXD34zcQU76WdN6IM8U&m=O8Xvdr4b-sZQlqirX2sVERXcoH8CpzS5U03KhTtOxToFvNCSe_Bf5jiDyCUM6cAt&s=cG2E_OkaCD1nSE0u2FCIgLuzi7T9fwDyqf03FYRGgC0&e=

Sent from my iPad

From: [Tod Hickman](#)
To: [Lara Weisiger](#); [City Clerk](#); [Tony Daysog](#); [Tracy Jensen](#); [Trish Spencer](#); [Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft](#); [Malia Vella](#)
Cc: [Jennifer Ott](#); [Abby Thorne-Lyman](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Building 43 Public Comment Item 7-A June 4. 2024
Date: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 12:01:28 PM
Attachments: [June 4, 2024 City Council Natel letter.docx](#)

Hello City Clerk,

Here is our public comment for item 7-A tonight.

Attachments to follow.

June 4, 2024

To: City of Alameda Management and City Council

From: Steeltown Winery LLC DBA Building 43 Winery

RE: Natel illegal view blocking structure Regular Agenda Item 7A

Attachments: 1) 9-16-2014 memo from City manager 2) Pictures of our view 2014 vs. Current obstructed view.

City Council and City Management,

We plead with you to stop this illegal project. This project will further destroy our views and further diminish the value of our business and lease.

We started our business at 2440 Monarch Street, in June of 2014, prior to Natel erecting the current illegal view blocking structure. We had a fabulous view and this was the main reason we entered into our existing lease with the City.

Please see attached memo from Alameda City Manager dated September 16, 2014. Memo Quote: "Building 43 Winery, as they will rebrand the company, will be an artisan winery and tasting room, located in the urban setting of Alameda Point. It will be located across the street from Rock Wall Winery consistent with other adjacent wine and spirit uses, and the adaptive reuse and long-term vision for Alameda Point."

At this time Alameda was all-in on Spirits Alley and courted us here as the final piece of the Spirits Alley puzzle. There was never any talk of industrial/manufacturing uses on Spirits Alley. Our view across Monarch Street and to San Francisco was amazing and the primary value in our long-term lease. We could not fathom that the City would fail to enforce when Natel later built the existing illegal structure. And now here we are with Natel proposing another illegal structure based off the existing illegal structure.

The City has a duty to operate in good faith and performance. This precludes the City from ever agreeing to anything that will diminish the value of our lease and business investment in Alameda. The City has a higher duty to us as first-in-tenants.

The first lease has first priority. We are First in Time with our landlords First legal obligation being to us. The City cannot legally do anything to diminish the value of our lease.

The City has stalled us for several years on correction of Natel's current illegal structure and now the City appears to be actively conspiring with Natel to add another illegal further-view blocking structure that further diminishes the value of our lease and tenancy.

City staff makes several wrong assertions, regarding categorical exemption, in item 7-A. The City states:

- **“Existing Facilities, 15303-New Construction or replacement of Small Structures”** :The existing facility is an unpermitted illegal structure. The existing illegal structure and proposed structure are not small, towering 25 feet high and having a large footprint.
- **“And 15332- Infill Development”** : This is not in-fill development. This is a new structure built to perform functions the existing illegal structure cannot.
- **The remainder of the verbiage in 7A is written to misrepresent the facts of the illegality of what has happened at Natel and the City’s failure to enforce code, ordinance, law, and landlord fiduciary responsibility.**

City Planning Staff made several false assertions at the Planning Board Hearing for this item last month. The majority of their arguments for this project, and the false assertions that this is exempt from CEQA, are based around the concept of this project being simply a building extension. This could not be further from the truth. This project is a large footprint, 25-foot tall, stand-alone structure built to accomplish an industrial task not possible by the existing unpermitted, illegal, view blocking structure.

The City additionally appears to be on a path of attempting to intermix industrial/manufacturing with Spirits Alley. These are two incompatible uses that, when attempting to operate simultaneously, tear at the foundations of both. The City is attempting to classify industrial/manufacturing as technology. This simply is not true. There may be a technical emphasis with these industries however, they are not low impact technology that houses everything inside air-conditioned spaces.

Aside from all the arguments presented in this letter, some very basic concepts are the rule of law here and define the City’s obligation to Building 43 Winery:

-Our Landlords first legal obligation is to us and nothing shall be done to diminish the value of our tenancy. First lease, First priority.

-Natel has built an existing illegal structure that continues to destroy the value of our tenancy and is attempting to add another stand- alone structure that will further destroy our value.

Again, we plead with you, The City, to stop this further aggression against the value of our tenancy.

Respectfully,

Estela Villagrana

Tod Hickman

Building 43 Winery

From: [Kate Stirr](#)
To: [CityCouncil-List](#)
Cc: [Jennifer Ott](#); [Allen Tai](#); [Brian McGuire](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] CalTrout Letter of Support for Natel Energy Test Loop Expansion
Date: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 10:39:33 AM
Attachments: [Natel use permit CalTrout CityCouncil.pdf](#)

Dear Councilmembers and Staff,

Please find attached a letter from Curtis Knight, Executive Director of California Trout, in support of the expansion of Natel Energy's hydraulic test loop. ([2024-4095](#) Natel Use Permit.)

Thank you for your consideration,

Kate Stirr



Kate Stirr (she/her)

Vice President, External Affairs

+1 (503) 449-8669

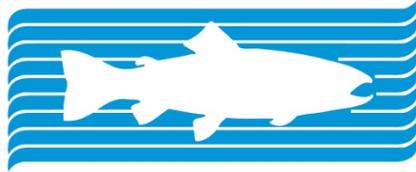
natelenergy.com

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CALIFORNIA TROUT



FISH · WATER · PEOPLE

May 31, 2024

To: Alameda City Council
Re: Natel Energy Use Permit

Dear Councilmembers:

I'm writing to express support for Natel's use permit application to expand their testing facility at their offices on Alameda Point. Natel is a leader in the hydropower industry advancing the science around how to design fishsafe turbines that help restore critical corridors through rivers for fish and other aquatic life, while enabling reliable, renewable energy from hydropower. Restoring connectivity in our river systems contributes to the resiliency of natural ecosystems and surrounding communities to climate change. Hydropower is also an important component of creating a zero-emission electrical grid to address our climate emergency, where global temperatures have already hit the 1.5 degree limit of the 2015 Paris Agreement. With over half of the United States hydropower fleet over 50 years old and in need of modernization, Natel's turbines present an opportunity to integrate enhanced environmental performance with the necessary cost of repowering.

The work that Natel does on their test facility in Alameda is critical to provide the rigorous test data that we and other environmental NGO's need to see to have confidence in their innovative designs. Natel has a robust track record of engaging with the environmental community, and I hope you approve the expansion of their test facility. We must tackle the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss with urgency, and Natel is an innovative company working at the precise intersection of those two crises.

Sincerely,

Curtis Knight
Executive Director
California Trout

435 Pacific Ave, Suite 200, San Francisco CA, 94133
Phone: m(530)859-1872 **E-mail:** cknight@caltrout.org

From: [Lori Bilella](#)
To: [CityCouncil-List](#)
Cc: [Allen Tai](#); [Brian McGuire](#); [Becca Perata](#); [Jennifer Ott](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] City Counsel Meeting 6/4 - Letter of Support Natal Energy
Date: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 10:20:06 AM
Attachments: [Letter of Support - Natal Energy - Lori Bilella -6_4_2024.pdf](#)

Please find attached a letter of support for the agenda item tonight regarding the CUP request for Natal Energy. Thank you for your consideration and service to our community.

with much gratitude,
Lori Bilella (they/them)

To: Alameda City Council
From: Lori Bilella
RE: Natal Energy - Letter of Support

Alameda City Counsel Members,

I am writing this letter in support of Natal Energy. I understand you all will be considering a request from Natal Energy for a use permit to expand outdoor testing of its fish-safe hydro turbine designs. The Planning Board unanimously approved the CUP in April, which was a decision supported by several Alameda Point businesses and Natel neighbors as demonstrated by their attendance and comments at the planning board meeting.

We need a reliable renewable energy grid, and hydropower is part of the solution

- Hydropower is an essential part of a reliable carbon-free grid
- 1 GW of hydro enables the construction of 3-5 GW of intermittent wind or solar — cheaper than any battery.
- We need to add 50GW of hydro annually by 2030 to limit warming to 1.5°C.

We need climate solutions that address biodiversity loss too

- Natel is tackling two key crises: climate change and biodiversity loss. Their tech enables existing hydropower sites to continue producing power while enhancing river connectivity.
- By prioritizing both efficient power production and biodiversity preservation as design constraints, Natel's technology will shift the entire hydropower industry toward improved environmental outcomes.

Why is it important that Natel is in Alameda?

- With the expansion of their test loop, Natel further roots their growth in Alameda and solidifies Alameda Point as a hub for climate technology development and positioning Alameda as a leader in supporting sustainable technology development.

I urge the city counsel to approve this CUP request. Furthermore, it is essential that Natal and the city continue to proactively communicate with the community about this essential work, its benefits, why we should care, and provide assurances to the community that it is safe for our residents and local ecosystems. Alameda point is uniquely positioned to host businesses and organizations that are focused on delivering innovative solutions that are essential to combating climate change, and in doing this it can be a source of economic prosperity for the city and residents of Alameda. Please approve this CUP and support the advancement of these critical benefits to Alameda and the world.

Sincerely,
Lori Bilella (they/them)
Alameda Resident

From: [Joe Ernst](#)
To: [Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft](#); [Tony Daysog](#); [Tracy Jensen](#); [Malia Vella](#); [Trish Spencer](#)
Cc: [City Clerk](#); [Steven Buckley](#); [Brian McGuire](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Natel Energy - City Council June 4, 2024
Date: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 10:12:20 AM
Attachments: [Natel Energy Letter of Support to CC - srmErnst - Joe Ernst 060324.pdf](#)

Attached please find my letter of support for Natel Energy and requesting the Council overturn the appeal to their prior use approval by the Planning Board.

Joe Ernst

srmErnst Development Partners

1919A Peralta Street | Oakland, CA 94607

p. 510.219.5376 | f. 510.380.7056 | jernst@srmernst.com | www.srmErnst.com

SRMERNST
development partners

June 3, 2024

Honorable Members of the Alameda City Council

Mayor Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft mezzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov

Vice Mayor Tony Daysog tdaysog@alamedaca.gov

Tracy Jensen tjensen@alamedaca.gov

Malia Vella mvella@alamedaca.gov

Trish Herrera Spencer tspencer@alamedaca.gov

Dear Council Members,

I am writing to express my support for Natel Energy's Use Permit application for the expansion of their hydraulic testing facility, located at their headquarters at Alameda Point. As a local developer and Alameda resident with extensive ties to Alameda Point, I firmly believe that embracing sustainable energy solutions is not only essential for mitigating environmental concerns but also for promoting Alameda's economic development objectives.

Natel Energy presents an innovative approach to addressing our energy needs while simultaneously reducing our carbon footprint and ensuring ecological biodiversity and river connectivity. Their commitment to harnessing renewable resources aligns perfectly with Alameda's values of environmental stewardship and forward-thinking development.

The benefits of renewable energy adoption are manifold. By transitioning to diverse clean energy sources, we can significantly reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions, improve air quality, and safeguard public health. Moreover, investing in renewable energy infrastructure creates job opportunities, attracts investment, and stimulates local economic growth. Natel's technology is a critical contributor to diverse sources.

Furthermore, Natel's business aligns with Alameda's long-term sustainability goals and environmental objectives. By supporting Natel we set up Alameda to attract more clean-tech companies.

I firmly endorse Natel Energy's Use Permit application and urge the City Council to overturn the appeal of their prior use approval by the Planning Board. Thank you for considering my input on this crucial matter.

Sincerely,



Joe Ernst
Managing Principal

Cc: City Staff
City Clerk: clerk@alamedaca.gov
Steven Buckley: sbuckley@alamedaca.gov
Brian McGuire: bmcguire@alamedaca.gov

From: [Tobin Fricke](#)
To: [CityCouncil-List](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] jott@alamedaca.gov, Atai@alamedaca.gov, Bmcguire@alamedaca.gov
Date: Monday, June 3, 2024 4:41:55 PM

Dear Councilmembers,

I am writing in enthusiastic support of the permit for Natel Energy's expansion of their hydraulic loop facility at Alameda Point.

I am a current Alameda homeowner, and I have worked in Alameda since 2014, when I moved back to California to take a job as an engineer at Makani Power on Alameda Point. Working at Makani, I fell in love with Alameda and my wife and I have chosen to make this city our home.

The diverse collection of businesses (many of them industrial startups) at Alameda Point is one of the things that makes living in Alameda so exciting and attractive. I'm particularly excited that Alameda seems to foster renewable energy startups. Climate change is the challenge of our times and it will require the innovation of many companies like Natel to meet this challenge. So close to sea level, we in Alameda have a particularly vested interest in seeing companies like Natel succeed.

Our own Alameda Municipal Power boasts of a "100% renewable power mix" including "small hydroelectric from Graeagle and Tuolumne County" and "20% from large hydroelectric projects in California." I think it is just awesome that one of our homegrown Alameda companies is working in support of expanding small-scale hydropower technology in an environmentally-conscious, fish-safe manner.

Alameda's legacy -- the facilities of the old Navy base -- have allowed all kinds of innovative industrial startups to thrive. Airborne wind power, robotic sailboats, hydrofoiling electric boats, pinball machine restoration, nuclear energy, rockets, hydropower, and even baking, brewing, malting, distilling, fermenting, cooking, family recreation, antiques, farming, and, yes, housing. If we want these kind of companies to stay in Alameda -- bringing employment and innovation -- then we need to allow them to build whatever unusual facilities they require with a minimum of fuss and red tape.

Natel's facility, in particular, is basically just a big pipe swooshing water around and testing how the fish like it and how well the hydroelectric generator works. It's quiet, non-toxic, useful, and it even looks interesting. It should not be at all controversial.

When I have guests from out of town, I enjoy taking them to the Point and showing them everything that is happening out there, *especially* the green energy startups, before we settle down at Firebrand for a coffee and pastry. I look forward to seeing the businesses at the Point thrive, and I also keep browsing their employment listings, since I'd really rather work at the Point than commute into San Francisco for my job.

thank you!
Tobin Fricke

2207 San Jose Avenue

From: [David Mik](#)
To: [CityCouncil-List](#)
Cc: [Jennifer Ott](#); [Allen Tai](#); [Brian McGuire](#); [Ben Ward](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Natel Energy Use Permit: Letter of Support
Date: Monday, June 3, 2024 1:13:18 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[Natel Energy Letter of Support PECC 05302024.pdf](#)

Dear Mayor Ashcraft and City Council Members:

I am writing to submit a letter of support on behalf of Natel Energy's Use Permit Application to expand their hydraulic testing facility. We work with Natel Energy (and many of the other technology startup companies here at Alameda Point) and embrace their vision of designing and testing environmentally friendly turbine solutions. It is my hope that after thoughtful consideration you approve their proposal.

Best,

D.

DAVID MIK

PRESIDENT

T 510.337.3800 ext.218 | C 415.559.0097

mik@powerengconstruction.com

Power Engineering Construction

1501 Viking Street, Suite 200 • Alameda, CA 94501



Mr. David Mik, President
Power Engineering Construction Co.
1501 Viking St. Ste 200
Alameda, CA 94501
(510) 337-3800

May 30, 2024

City Council of Alameda
City Hall, 2263 Santa Clara Avenue
Council Chambers, 3rd Floor
Alameda, CA 94501

Dear Mayor Ashcraft and City Council Members

I am writing to express my support for Natel Energy's Use Permit application for the expansion of their hydraulic testing facility, located at their headquarters at Alameda Point. As a local business owner, I firmly believe that embracing sustainable energy solutions is not only essential for mitigating environmental concerns but also for fostering economic growth and resilience.

Natel Energy presents an innovative approach to addressing our energy needs while simultaneously reducing our carbon footprint and ensuring ecological biodiversity and river connectivity. Their commitment to harnessing renewable resources aligns perfectly with our community's values of environmental stewardship and forward-thinking development.

The benefits of renewable energy adoption are manifold. By transitioning to clean energy sources, we can significantly reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions, improve air quality, and safeguard public health. Moreover, investing in renewable energy infrastructure creates job opportunities, attracts investment, and stimulates local economic growth.

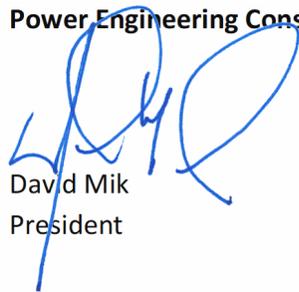
Over the years, Natel has exhibited a dedication to community engagement and collaboration. Their willingness to work closely with stakeholders, listen to concerns, and incorporate feedback demonstrates their commitment to responsible development and ensures that the project reflects the needs and aspirations of our community.

Furthermore, Natel's business aligns with our town's long-term sustainability goals and environmental objectives. By supporting Natel we can set a positive example for neighboring communities and contribute to broader efforts to combat climate change on a global scale.

In conclusion, I wholeheartedly endorse Natel Energy's Use Permit application and urge the planning board to approve their proposal. Thank you for considering my input on this crucial matter.

Sincerely,

Power Engineering Construction Co.



David Mik
President

From: [Christina Liebner](#)
To: [CityCouncil-List](#)
Cc: [Jennifer Ott](#); [Allen Tai](#); [Brian McGuire](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] In support of Natel's proposed hydraulic loop expansion
Date: Monday, June 3, 2024 12:53:30 PM

Dear Councilmembers,

I've been a resident of Alameda for 6 years, settling here, after ten years in other cities all around the bay, in a duplex near Park St with my husband, two young daughters (in daycare and preschool in Alameda), and with my husband's sister and her family. We love and appreciate the care Alameda takes of its natural resources -- its open spaces, parks, and beaches, and I'm so proud to tell non residents that our municipal utility, AMP, sources from 100% renewable resources.

As someone who cares deeply about addressing climate change, preserving biodiversity and about Alameda's economic and community growth, I am proud of Natel's work and presence in Alameda. As a parent, I am proud to be able to point to the collection of climate-focused companies in Alameda. Natel is part of inspiring the next generation of Alameda kids to care for the environment. With the expansion of their test loop, Natel further roots their growth in Alameda and solidifies Alameda Point as a hub for climate technology development and positioning Alameda as a leader in supporting sustainable technology development.

If this expansion is permitted to proceed, maybe someday AMP will purchase power from a hydro plant running Natel's turbines!

Cheers,

From: [Andrea Dunlap](#)
To: [CityCouncil-List](#)
Cc: [Jennifer Ott](#); [Allen Tai](#); [Brian McGuire](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Natel Energy agenda item
Date: Monday, June 3, 2024 11:10:31 AM

Members of the Alameda City Council,

I work down the road from Natel, at Rain, where we are building rapid autonomous fire suppression capabilities to help with the wildfire problem we're facing in California. We, like Natel, are trying to use technology that is available *today* to alleviate some of the worst effects of climate change, as quickly as possible. Expanding their test loop is important as they scale their fish-safe hydropower technology and will enable them to validate its capabilities for their customers.

I very much enjoy being neighbors with Natel. As a staff member of a small business, I often don't have much overlap with my fellow colleagues' skill sets and job requirements. In my case, I am the only one in my area of expertise, and when I want the opinion of a peer in my field I never hesitate to call upon the communication and policy team at Natel as part of my brain trust!

Having people working on climate technology nearby makes us a stronger community on the base. Having climate jobs in Alameda makes us a more attractive community for people deciding where to live.

Thankfully for many years I've been able to enjoy biking to work in Alameda on climate technology, and Alameda has the chance now, by approving this hydro test loop adjustment, to accelerate a climate solution that solidifies our community as a leader in supporting sustainable technology development. And, which will hopefully over time will enable an increasing number of Natel employees—who I know in the community as parents, engineers, communicators, scientists, technicians and friends—to bike to work alongside me, and who will keep our grid carbon-free and eco-friendly at a time when we most desperately need it. This is a moment for Alamedans to live their values.

Thank you for considering my view,
Andrea Dunlap

--

Andrea Dunlap
Creative Director
[Rain.aero](#)



From: [Erik Chubb](#)
To: [CityCouncil-List](#)
Cc: [Jennifer Ott](#); [Allen Tai](#); [Brian McGuire](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Natel Energy's Use Permit
Date: Sunday, June 2, 2024 8:52:01 PM

Dear City Council Members,

My name is Erik Chubb, I live on 9th St in Alameda and work at Sairdron on Alameda Point. I am also a former member of the Alameda Economic Development Advisory Panel (EDAP).

I am writing in support of Natel energy expanding their hydraulic testing facility. Approving this Use Permit is good for Natel, the city government, and the people of Alameda.

By expanding their test loop, Natel further roots their growth in Alameda. If they grow, the people of Alameda benefit by getting the opportunity to live and work on the island. The city benefits by further solidifying Alameda Point as a hub for climate and technology. The earth benefits by getting sustainable energy that does not destroy ecosystems.

Natel has a mission aligned with the values of Alamedians and they are good corporate citizens -- often organizing trash-pick-ups, etc. Alameda should foster a strong relationship with companies like Natel, please encourage them to stay and thrive by granting this permit.

Erik Chubb

From: [Brian McGuire](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL] Letter of Support for Natel
Date: Friday, May 31, 2024 9:43:32 PM
Attachments: [image.png](#)
[Pyka - Natel Letter of Support signed.pdf](#)

fyi

From: Elizabeth Goodine <elizabeth@flypyka.com>
Sent: Friday, May 31, 2024 4:26:48 PM
To: Jennifer Ott; Allen Tai; Brian McGuire
Cc: Chuma Ogunwole
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter of Support for Natel

Dear Staff Members,

Pyka would like to respectfully submit a letter of support for Natel's loop expansion project on Alameda Point to the Alameda City Council. Please consider our attached letter in your upcoming June 4th meeting.

Sincerely,

Chuma Ogunwole, COO, Pyka

Elizabeth Goodine, Head of Manufacturing, Pyka



Elizabeth Goodine (she/her)
Head of Manufacturing
207.299.0303 | elizabeth@flypyka.com
www.flypyka.com

Elizabeth Goodine
Head of Manufacturing
Pyka
1960 Mandela Pkwy
Oakland, CA 94607

Chuma Ogunwole
Co-founder and Chief Operating Officer
Pyka
1960 Mandela Pkwy
Oakland, CA 94607

May 28, 2024

Alameda City Council
City Hall
2263 Santa Clara Avenue, Room 320
Alameda, CA 94501

Re: [2024-4095 Natel Use Permit](#)

Dear Members of the Alameda City Council,

We are writing to express our enthusiastic support for Natel Energy's Use Permit application to expand their hydraulic testing facility at Alameda Point. Pyka is deeply invested in the advancement of innovative technology and we are heartened by the progress and potential of Natel Energy.

Pyka is currently in the process of expanding its manufacturing facility and operations to Building 39 on Alameda Point. In addition to the physical space, we are excited to become part of a community that fosters innovation and supports the growth of forward-thinking companies. The vibrant ecosystem of technology and sustainability-focused businesses in Alameda, exemplified by Natel Energy, creates an inspiring environment for our work in autonomous electric aviation.

We understand that Natel's proposed expansion of their hydraulic test loop is a crucial step in scaling their revolutionary hydropower technology. This expansion is vital for performing the necessary scale model testing required to validate their hydropower solutions for utility customers. As we work to reduce the carbon footprint of aviation, we

are acutely aware of the challenges faced by other companies in the climate sector. Alameda has helped foster Natel's success to-date and we urge you to support their continued progress.

The importance of Natel's work extends beyond just technological advancement to address both climate change and biodiversity loss. By enhancing river connectivity while maintaining efficient power production, Natel sets a new standard for environmental responsibility within the hydropower industry. Their commitment to scientific research, evidenced by multiple peer-reviewed papers, further underscores their role as pioneers in this field.

Natel's presence in Alameda is a source of pride for our community. Their contributions to local economic growth, commitment to environmental sustainability, and role in inspiring future generations of innovators are invaluable. The expansion of their test loop will reinforce Alameda Point as a hub for climate technology, positioning our city as a leader in supporting sustainable development.

In conclusion, we strongly support Natel Energy's application to expand their hydraulic testing facility. This project will not only advance critical climate solutions but also enhance the vibrancy and sustainability of our community. We urge the City Council to approve Natel's application and support the growth of this vital company.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Goodine
Head of Manufacturing
Pyka



Chuma Ogunwole
Co-founder and Chief Operating Officer
Pyka

From: [Deng, Zhiqun \(Daniel\)](#)
To: [CityCouncil-List](#)
Cc: [Jennifer Ott](#); [Allen Tai](#); [Brian McGuire](#); becca@voxpopulipr.net
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter of Support for Natel Energy's test facility
Date: Friday, May 31, 2024 1:45:33 PM
Attachments: [Natel_support_letter_Deng_05312024.pdf](#)

Dear Alameda City Council Members,

I have been working with Natel Energy for many years. I am attaching a support letter to provide my full endorsement for their test facility's continued operation.

Regards,
Daniel

Z. Daniel Deng, Ph.D.
Laboratory Fellow
Energy and Environment Directorate
Pacific Northwest National Laboratory
P.O. Box 999, MSIN K9-33
Richland, WA 99354 USA
Tel: 509-372-6120
Zhiqun.deng@pnnl.gov



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Phone: (509) 372-6120
zhiqun.deng@pnl.gov

May 31, 2024

RE: Letter of Support for Natel Energy's test facility

Dear Alameda City Council Members,

I am writing to support Natel Energy's test facility. I am a corporate fellow at the U.S. Department of Energy's Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) and an adjunct professor at University of Michigan. I direct the PNNL Bio-Acoustics & Flow Laboratory, an accredited multi-disciplinary R&D laboratory, addressing a broad range of engineering and ecological issues, with an emphasis on environmental monitoring and risk assessment for hydropower, wind, marine, and hydrokinetic energy systems. I have coauthored 160+ journal articles and 100+ government technical reports. I am also the U.S. representative for the International Energy Agency's Hydropower & Fish Annex.

Natel Energy is a leader in the development of fish-safe hydro turbines, and their test facility in Alameda is key to their leadership and innovation. In addition, their test facility is unique and valuable within the hydropower industry nationally and internationally. Finally, the facility is a great asset for the city of Alameda given its contributions to the hydropower community.

In summary, I fully support Natel Energy's continued operation and development of turbine test equipment. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Zhiqun Deng".

Zhiqun (Daniel) Deng

From: [Matt Kreutz](#)
To: [CityCouncil-List](#); [Jennifer Ott](#); [Allen Tai](#); [Brian McGuire](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter in Support of Natel Energy's Expansion
Date: Friday, May 31, 2024 1:40:20 PM

Dear Members of the Alameda City Council,

I am writing to express my wholehearted support for Natel Energy's Use Permit application concerning the expansion of their hydraulic test facility at their headquarters in Alameda Point. As the CEO and founder of a bakery deeply rooted in community values, I understand the significance of championing fellow mission-driven enterprises within our Alameda Point neighborhood. The decision to relocate to Alameda Point was fueled by the vibrant energy and innovative spirit embodied by companies like Natel Energy.

At Firebrand, we are committed to nurturing growth within our team, recognizing that the collective strength of individuals shapes the foundation of our community. This principle extends to the broader context of our locality, where small businesses unite to contribute their respective strengths for the greater good.

Natel Energy's work in combatting climate change and safeguarding biodiversity resonates deeply with the pressing environmental challenges of our time. Their pursuit of innovative technologies and scalable solutions necessitates the expansion of their test facility at Alameda Point. Your endorsement of this pivotal expansion not only signals support for pioneering ventures spearheading a cleaner energy future but also reaffirms Alameda Point as a beacon of innovation.

As an advocate for climate action, biodiversity preservation, and the holistic growth of Alameda's economy and community, I take immense pride in Natel's contributions to Alameda. Moreover, as a parent of two small children here in Alameda, I find solace in the prospect of nurturing a generation of environmentally conscious individuals inspired by the collective efforts of climate-focused enterprises in our town.

I implore you to deliberate on the positive implications for nature and the climate that Natel's expansion could catalyze, should it be granted approval.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Matt Kreutz
CEO - Firebrand, PBC
(510) 410-1305

From: [Kenny Jensen](#)
To: [CityCouncil-List](#)
Cc: [Jennifer Ott](#); [Allen Tai](#); becca@voxpathulpr.net; [Ben Ward](#); [Brian McGuire](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for Natel's Use Permit (2024-4095)
Date: Thursday, May 30, 2024 2:20:14 PM

Dear City Council:

I would like to express my support for Natel Energy's Use Permit application for the expansion of their hydraulic testing facility.

Alameda Point is a very unique place in all of the Bay Area for hardware startups, and clean energy startups in particular. It is one of the few places that has the space and infrastructure to support developing large scale hardware such as Natel's hydraulic testing facility. Hardware startups (e.g., Astra, Rain, Saildrone, Navier, Pyka, etc.) come here exactly because it is possible to build here. And with the startups comes investment, jobs, improvements to the buildings at the Point, and many secondary effects like support for local machine shops.

These hardware startups are also very mutually beneficial. Natel has helped out Navier (where I am CTO) in multiple ways. They've generously offered us use of their machine tools and shop space. Also, they let us use their parking lot, with a scenic view of SF, for a photo shoot of our product.

I'm a long term resident of Alameda (since 2010). My kids go to school here. My wife has run summer camps here (Galileo). And, I've worked at multiple clean energy companies at the Point (Makani and now Navier). I strongly believe that innovative hardware companies, like Natel, are one of the key characteristics of Alameda, and one of the things that make it such a great place to live.

Respectfully,

Kenny Jensen
Navier, CTO
510-314-1809

From: [Shelby S](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Cc: [Trish Spencer](#); [Malia Vella](#); [Tony Daysog](#); [Tracy Jensen](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE Item 7A 7-A 2024-4095--Natel review--NOT CEQA Exempt
Date: Wednesday, May 29, 2024 11:47:53 PM

Please add this comment to the item:

This Project is in no uncertain terms exempt from CEQA review. CEQA regulations prohibit Categorical Exemptions in Historic Districts. I have told you this so many times it's ridiculous.

YOU CAN READ and it is your job to be familiar with the law. It's as easy as reading the ALAMEDA MUNICIPAL CODE and then doing your job.

I've sent you volumes of excerpts about CEQA regulations, the AP EIR requirements, and the City's land use regulations and plans. Yet you sit in City Council meetings and continue to violate the law and you give me a blank stare when I speak about it.

Nonetheless, here again, I submit the following:

APPLICABLE LAND USE REGULATIONS

1. AMC Zoning Code Section 30-4.24. Alameda Point Regulations: The regulations in this section are applicable to all properties within the Alameda Point Zoning District. Cited here in case you try to deny knowledge of these regulations:

30-4.24 - Alameda Point District.

a. Purpose. This section provides regulations to facilitate and guide future development at Alameda Point consistent with the goals and objectives of the 1996 Naval Air Station (NAS) Alameda Community Reuse Plan, the City of Alameda General Plan, and:

1. Seamlessly integrate the former Naval Air Station property into the physical and social fabric of the City of Alameda.
2. Replace the jobs lost by the departure of the Navy and fostering new economic development opportunities on the former federal lands.
3. ***Increase public access to the waterfront*** and supporting maritime commercial and industrial use of the waterfront.
4. Create mixed-use transit oriented walkable districts that deemphasize the automobile and support alternative modes of transportation.
5. Create sustainable districts that minimize greenhouse gas emissions, energy and water use, and maximize protection of the natural environment.

b. Applicability. The regulations in this section are applicable to all properties within the Alameda Point Zoning District. In addition to these regulations, all new construction, alterations, and land use within the Alameda Point Zoning District must comply with the following permit requirements.

1. Alameda Municipal Code. Regulations in the Alameda Municipal Code (AMC) not covered by this section remain applicable to the Alameda Point Zoning District, including, but not limited to Section 13-19 (Green Building Requirements) and Section 30-58 (Water Conservation and Bay Friendly Landscaping Requirements). When the content of this section conflicts with another part of the AMC, this section shall govern.
2. Waterfront Town Center Sub-district and Main Street Neighborhood Sub-district Specific Plans. Development within the A-P Main Street Neighborhood shall be consistent

with the Main Street Neighborhood Specific Plan. Development within the A-P-Waterfront Town Center sub-district shall be consistent with the Town Center and Waterfront Precise Plan.

3. Design Review Required for All New Development. All improvements requiring building permits shall be subject to the requirements of AMC 30-36 Design Review Procedures and AMC 30-37 Design Review Regulations. All design review applications shall be reviewed for conformance with the submittal requirements for a Development Plan as required by AMC 30-4.13(j), the regulations of this Section and the applicable sections of the Citywide Design Review Manual.

4. Biological Regulations and On-site Lighting. All new construction projects, **alterations to existing buildings and new uses shall comply with the conditions set forth in the Declaration of Restrictions for the Former Naval Air Station** (Declaration) consistent with the Biological Opinion issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife and Exhibit C (Alameda Point Lighting Mitigation Measures) of the Memorandum of Agreement between the City of Alameda and Department of Veteran's Affairs.

5. NAS Alameda Historic District Guidelines. **All new construction and modifications to existing buildings within the NAS Alameda Historic District should be consistent with the Guide to Preserving the Character of the Naval Air Station Alameda Historic District, as amended, and AMC Section 13-21** (Preservation of Historical and Cultural Resources).

6. Public Trust Exchange Act and Agreement. All use of land and existing buildings and new construction shall be reviewed for consistency with Naval Air Station Alameda Public Trust Exchange Act, Chapter 734, Statutes of 2000, as amended by Chapter 429, Statutes of 2011 and Naval Air Station Alameda Exchange Agreement regarding Public Trust Lands at Alameda Point, referred to collectively in this section as the Public Trust Exchange Agreement.

7. Alameda Point Environmental Impact Report Mitigation Monitoring Program. **All new development and uses shall be reviewed for consistency with the 2014 Alameda Point Environmental Impact Report**, adopted Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.8.

8. Alameda Point Master Infrastructure Plan. All new development and uses shall be reviewed for consistency with the Alameda Point Master Infrastructure Plan.

9. Alameda Point Master Transportation Demand Management Plan. All new development and uses shall be reviewed for consistency with the Alameda Point Transportation Demand Management Plan.

→ NONE OF THE ABOVE HAS BEEN DONE.

→NATEL'S PERMIT APPLICATION IS STILL INCOMPLETE (i.e., they still haven't provided the information requested by Planning staff they were supposed to submit before the Project went before the Planning Board.)

2. ALAMEDA POINT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT: Consistent with AMC 30-4.24 and CEQA, the AP EIR requires **ALL** Projects at Alameda Point to undergo CEQA/environmental review for mandatory findings of significance for potential impacts to biological and historic resources, air quality and traffic, and cumulative impacts from each individual project on the whole of Alameda Point. Good examples of the required Historic Resource analysis done by the City in the past in compliance with the AP EIR, were previously sent to you by ME in 3 different reports from VerPlanck Historical Consultants.

- ALL PROJECTS AT ALAMEDA POINT MUST UNDERGO ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW
- CITY STAFF ARE KNOWINGLY AND WILLFULLY LYING TO HIDE THIS FACT AND THE CITY IS COLLUDING
- All City Council has to do is read the Alameda Municipal Code, that's minimal due diligence and there is no excuse for not doing so.

3. CEQA CATEGORICAL EXEMPTIONS PROHIBITED=EXEMPTION EXCEPTIONS

a. **Exemption Exceptions** (https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=21728). Categorical exemptions are made up of classes of projects that generally are considered not to have potential impacts on the environment. Categorical exemptions are identified by the State Resources Agency and are defined in the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR Section 15300-15331). Pursuant to CEQA 14 CCR Section 15300.2, Categorical exemptions are not allowed for projects: (1) when there is a potential for **cumulative impacts** over time ((14 CCR Section 15300.2(b)); (2) where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to **unusual circumstances** ((14 CCR Section 15300.2(C))--LIKE A LEAST TERN NESTING SITE; and/or (3) that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an **historical resource** (14 CCR Section 15300.2(f)).

➔ NO PROJECT AT ALAMEDA POINT IS EXEMPT FROM CEQA

b. **“Responsible Agencies” are to be consulted and are required to submit written comments.** ([Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 14, CEQA § 15096](#))

(b) Response to Consultation. A responsible agency shall respond to consultation by the lead agency in order to assist the lead agency in preparing adequate environmental documents for the project. By this means, the responsible agency will ensure that the documents it will use will comply with CEQA.

(1) ...Where the responsible agency disagrees with the lead agency's [proposed determination] the responsible agency should identify the significant environmental effects which it believes could result from the project and [make recommendations].

➔ I personally contacted Susan Euing, (susan-euing@fws.gov) the USFWS contact for the Least Tern Nesting site-- requesting documentation regarding her review of this Project (05/03/2024). She has thus far refused to even reply to me and has not provided her opinion as required by law.

c. **Required Procedures:** All CEQA Determinations must follow the proper methodology (e.g. include CEQA Appendices M and N) so as to contain **“Substantial evidence”** to support the determination; and must be made **available to the public for review and comment**.

➔ City staff have not provided the required documentation, and even if the project WAS Exempt from mCEQA, they need to document their review and provide it to the public (e.g., they should provide filled out version of CEQA Appendices M and N)

CONTINUED MISCONDUCT BY CITY COUNCILMEMBERS

1. **GC Section 3060-3075.** Willful feigned ignorance is knowingly wrongful conduct that can lead to a Grand Jury indictment and removal from office,
2. **Civil Liability.** both the City as well as councilmembers can be held personally-liable for damages to members of the public and to the environment.
3. **CA Penal Code Section 115(a).** Felony Crimes Against Public Justice. Every person who **knowingly** procures or offers any false or forged instrument (Like a bullshit CEQA determination) to be filed, registered, or recorded in any public office within this state, which instrument, if genuine, might be filed, registered, or recorded under any law of this state or of the United States, is guilty of a felony punishable by up to 3 years in prison.

➔ City staff consistently lie about CEQA to Council and the City Attorney knows it but allows

it, and City Council knows it as well, but everyone sits there and votes for the Project anyway. The Planning Board doesn't have a clue about the very land use regulations they are supposed to enforce. It's a total sham.

Based on the above, I recently submitted a claim against the City for damages from ongoing Public Nuisance for violations of land use regulations and felony violations of CA PC section 115 by City staff for unpermitted or improperly permitted Projects at Alameda Point.

Regarding Natel, the Fencing, current outdoor activities, and these newly-proposed outdoor activities illegally block the public vistas, diminish the value of the Historic Architecture, and violate the conditions of the Biological Opinion.

Their already existing "outdoor operations" and "outdoor storage" are currently unpermitted (!!!), and should be re-located to the "Shops" area, and should not be occurring in the Hangars Area that is supposed to be reserved for "Customer-serving" businesses.

The City is wrongfully cowering to private business interests and sacrificing their duty to the public.

Only idiocy or intentional misconduct would cause this Project to be approved.

Lets see how you vote....hmmmm?