

# Parkmerced Water Infrastructure

San Francisco, California



Image credit: SOM

Created in the 1950s, the San Francisco neighborhood of Parkmerced consisted primarily of low-rise garden apartments and mid-rise towers designed to provide affordable homes to returning GIs and their families. Over the next several decades, however, the car-centric, resource consumptive neighborhood descended into disrepair. In the mid-2000s new property owners sought to transform Parkmerced and began a multi-year process to engage stakeholders and craft a master plan.

Envisioned as a vibrant, sustainable, pedestrian-focused

neighborhood and one of the first net-zero carbon communities in America, the new Parkmerced aims to make a positive contribution to the ecological and social health of the region and city. Embedded in the master plan is the intention to modify the neighborhood's relationship with its natural ecosystems by restoring watersheds, replenishing a diminishing Lake Merced, integrating wildlife habitat into the urban environment, and reducing the impact on the city's wastewater treatment plants. Biohabitats is a key member of a consultant team that is working to bring this vision, which also includes

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*Innovative water infrastructure helps transform a San Francisco Bay neighborhood into a vibrant, self-sustaining community that enhances urban ecology.*

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the intention to triple quality housing density without increasing water use, to life.

Parkmerced plans to increase in population from 3,211 to 8,900 units of housing and as a goal, hold existing potable water consumption levels.

As a subconsultant to PAE, Biohabitats developed strategies to sustainably manage water in ways that would link people and the built environment to the broader ecological community. After analyzing existing data and building program information, the team developed concepts for rainwater harvesting, greywater and blackwater treatment and reuse.

The ultimate vision for Parkmerced's recycled water strategy involves developing a network of interconnected and/or pockets of

stand-alone, decentralized water recycling treatment facilities to serve the incremental growth and non-potable water demand patterns at the site. These facilities are designed to harvest stormwater and wastewater from the project's sewer system at strategic locations and serve at a minimum two to three buildings per system, though development of higher-flow systems can provide a desirable economy of scale. These systems may also become an additional profit center since the recycled water can be applied to offset Parkmerced's water purchases and potentially be sold to adjacent offsite properties.

## SERVICES

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