



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of Interior

## **NPS Cosco Busan Recreational Use Program**

# **Install Accessible Pathway to Battery Chamberlin at Baker Beach Final Programmatic Report**

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July, 2019

Recipient Park Unit:	Golden Gate National Recreation Area
Project Location:	Baker Beach, Presidio of San Francisco, CA
Date Approved:	December 12, 2017
Project Period:	January – June, 2018
Award Amount:	\$95,167
Total Expended:	\$95,167
Matching Contribution:	\$700,000 for other accessibility improvements at Baker Beach
Fund Source:	National Park Service
Project Number:	PHP0244014A

### **1. Summary of Accomplishments**

This project funded rehabilitation of the pedestrian path to the historic Battery Chamberlin and its World War I era Disappearing Gun interpretive display at Baker Beach, on the Presidio of San Francisco. The project provides universal access and an improved experience for all visitors to the site.

### **2. Project Activities & Outcomes**

Baker Beach is a day-use site located in the Presidio of San Francisco, within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. The site includes one mile of sandy beach, the historic Battery Chamberlin, restrooms, two picnic areas and three parking areas totaling over 200 spaces. Baker Beach draws close to 500,000 visitors per year who come to the site to experience a variety of recreational activities including walking, jogging, picnicking, sunbathing, and dog-walking.

Battery Chamberlin was built in 1904 to defend San Francisco's underwater mine fields during World War I. The Battery houses the only remaining "disappearing gun" on the

West Coast. The gun, built in 1905, is a 50-ton, six-inch diameter “disappearing gun” that is very similar to the Battery’s four original disappearing guns. The weapon got its name from its innovative design – it was mounted on a disappearing carriage that swung the gun out of view and line of fire for loading to protect it from attackers. The Battery and the Disappearing Gun are open every day to visitors to Baker Beach. The National Park Service (NPS) also hosts monthly Disappearing Gun loading demonstrations for park visitors.

Prior to this project, opportunities for universal access to the Disappearing Gun interpretive display in Battery Chamberlin were limited. The designated accessible asphalt parking areas and paved path were in an advanced state of deterioration making accessible travel difficult. In addition, the signage, pavement markings, slopes and egress requirements were not compliant with federal accessibility standards.

This project rehabilitated the pedestrian path to Battery Chamberlin to meet federal accessibility standards for universal access, including the Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards (ABAAS) and the Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Recreation Areas (AGODA). The Battery Chamberlin pathway improvements were part of a larger project to upgrade and rehabilitate all of the visitor facilities at Baker Beach for universal access, providing a significantly improved visitor experience.

This project included demolition and disposal of the existing asphalt pathway and construction of approximately 225 linear feet by 8 feet wide, compliant accessible asphalt path, for universal access from the existing accessible parking spaces in the north parking lot, to the apron in front of Battery Chamberlin with its interpretive displays. This required regrading to correct faulty grades, installation of 1580 sq. ft. of compacted aggregate base where existing sand below grade prevented acceptable compaction, and asphalt paving of the accessible path to the Battery. In order to contain sand accumulation on the path, 165 feet of concrete curb was installed along its edge. In addition, five deteriorated wooden bollards were replaced with TimberForm Traffic Bollards to maintain pedestrian-only access to the Battery Chamberlin path.

The NPS funded and completed approximately \$700,000 of other accessibility improvements at Baker Beach as required by an accessibility settlement agreement, including the following:

- Re-striping of the north parking lot including 7 accessible parking spaces
- 1,150 linear feet of compliant accessible routes of travel from the parking areas to the restroom facilities, picnic areas and new scenic view area/overlook plaza with benches
- 6 universal access picnic areas with concrete aprons and accessible grills
- Improvements to the exterior of the bathrooms including accessible benches and an accessible drinking fountain and water filling station
- New wheelchair accessible route to the beach via 200 linear feet of 6 foot wide elevated wooden boardwalk with a stairway and accessible ramp at the base.

### **3. Benefits**

The rehabilitation of the Battery Chamberlin Path resulted in improved safety for all visitors by meeting outdoor accessibility standards. The upgrading of aged facilities and improved design contribute to a greatly improved visitor experience. The path is now constructed of more durable materials, resulting in reduced NPS maintenance costs and a longer lifespan for the accessible pathway. The path was originally planned to have an aggregate surface but further evaluation determined that an asphalt pathway would allow for easier removal of shifting sand without damage to the surface material.

### **4. Lessons Learned**

This project was originally conceived to include construction of an accessible boardwalk from the Baker Beach parking lot down to the beach. However, during the course of discussions within the park and with the Trustee Council, it came to light that the accessible beach boardwalk was required by the terms of a Settlement Agreement reached on February 3, 2014 between Lori Gray, et al. and Golden Gate National Recreation Area, et al. regarding accessibility to park sites and programs. NRDA funds may not be used to meet the terms of a different settlement agreement. After further review by DOI legal counsel, it was determined that the Battery Chamberlin path was not a required component of the settlement agreement. Rather, it was an optional component that was identified as part of a suite of additional components that could be used to complete \$3 million of additional accessibility projects beyond the required projects. By 2017 the park had already exceeded the \$3 million in accessibility improvements without the Battery Chamberlin path. The Cosco Busan Trustee Council then concurred that the path could be constructed with Cosco Busan funds.

### **5. Funding acknowledgement**

Funding for this recreational use restoration project was provided by the Cosco Busan Trustee Council comprised of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the California State Lands Commission, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Department of the Interior through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Park Service. Cosco Busan funds were used to demolish and reconstruct the accessible pathway to Battery Chamberlin.

In addition to Cosco Busan funding for the Battery Chamberlin path, NPS-funded staff at GGNRA provided project management and contracting support for this project.

## 6. Figures

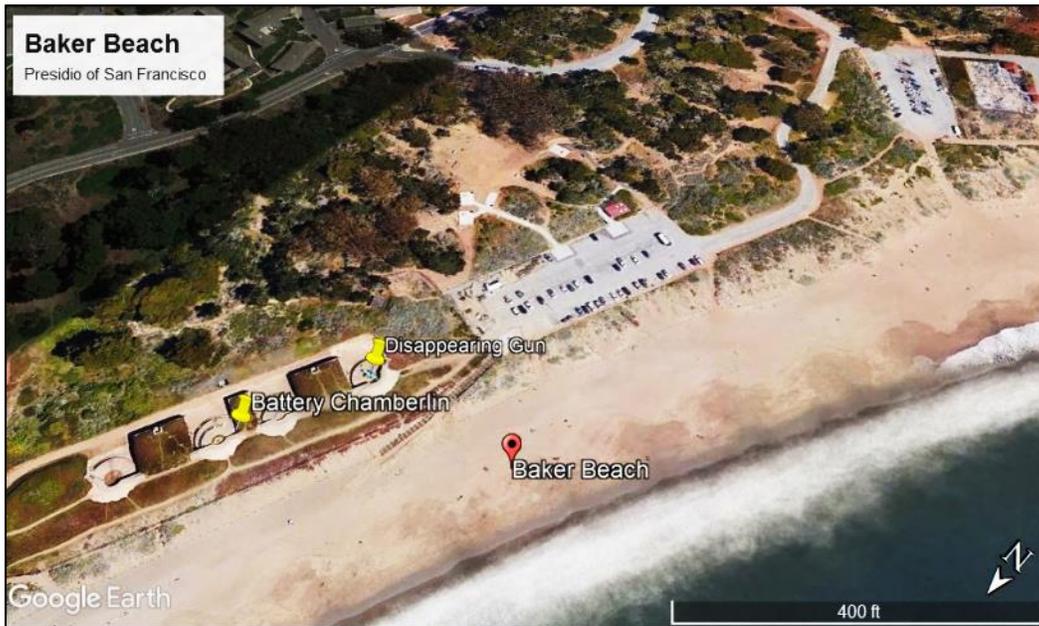


Figure 1. Google Earth aerial view of Baker Beach including Battery Chamberlin and the Disappearing Gun on the Presidio of San Francisco



Figure 2. Entrance to Battery Chamberlin path before accessibility enhancements and new signage. The Golden Gate Bridge is visible in the background.



Figure 3. Battery Chamberlin path before accessibility improvements.



Figure 4. Battery Chamberlin path after accessibility improvements.



Figure 5. Battery Chamberlin from the landward side along the Coastal Trail route.



Figure 6. NPS "Disappearing Gun" demonstration, held monthly, at Battery Chamberlin. The six-inch rifle is in the "out of battery" or loading position.



Figures 7 and 8. New signage at entrance to Battery Chamberlin.