

An Oasis at the Albany Waterfront

The seating area west of the Cove is rarely used when I have visited the site. Why?

The failure of this site as a place to linger and enjoy the vista is not based on the view, the weather nor the location. People are naturally drawn to use a place for its **Sense of Place**. Good design draws the visitor to the site and invites them to pause and experience the site. It provides seating that is protected by the landscape. It does not provide distractions within the view but delights the eye with multiple perspectives, each with their own unique but complementary theme. New landscaping and the redesign of the seating area are vital to creating that **Sense of Place: An Oasis on the Waterfront**.

The view of triangle at the intersection of the access road and the trail paths, with its unnaturally painted concrete culverts and the elevated metal signage along with haphazard storage of bicycles, clutters the vista with conflicting man-made features that remind us not of the beauty and serenity of nature but the disharmony of modern life.

Note: This spot is also the only wheelchair accessible point on the waterfront.

With this new design, as you approach the cove up the path to its right, you will see a row of fruit trees with raised beds of vegetables lining the path to your left. As you reach the top of the grade, your eye will meet with the double delight of the terraced triangle planting ahead and the bay view to south and west. The introduction of new trees, both to the south and the west, protect the space by providing both shade from the sun and by bringing a new scale to the space. There are plenty of open and unprotected places to enjoy beyond. This will provide a highly needed place to stop and enjoy a different perspective whether entering or leaving the park.

Oasis Seating Area:

1. Move bicycle racks out of the view of seating and viewing area but into a highly visible location within view of people to inhibit tampering with the bikes.
 2. Install one or two picnic benches
 3. Install new seating area facing south west toward the beach within the new tree planting.
-

Triangle Planting: Specification planting located at the triangle of the access road and path, directly south of the benches and presently occupied by two colorful culverts.

- Take a soil sample of this area. Construct two four foot walls out of urbanite, one wall on the low east side and one wall midway in order to terrace the area and allow for mounding of appropriate planting soil.
- Plant material: Yucca various species, Phoenix robellini - **miniature date palm** (multi trunk), 1 Aesculus californica - **California buckeye** - multi trunk, a few Baccharis pilularis - **dwarf coyote bush**, various penstemons, Zauschneria californica - **California fuchsia**, a few Buddleja davidii - **Butterfly bush**

Oasis Planting:

South Side of Cove to the immediate left of the benches and in front facing the brunt of the bay winds-

- Eucalyptus lehmanii - **Bushy Yate** - height only 12-20 feet spread as wide, beautiful small tough Eucalyptus - 2 or 3,
- Myoporum laetum - the toughest of the tough, prune to a shade tree not a huge haystack, various Heteromeles arbutifolia (Toyon) and Fremontedendron, try as under story plants.
- North Side of Cove: Behind the bench and curving around and behind the horseshoe retaining wall - **a row of fruit trees and small raised vegetable beds.**
- Test the soil. bring in ample planting soil, and for **raised beds grow entirely in imported planting mix - Lemons, apples, quinces for fruit trees**

Community Installation Project: Most of the landscaping work could be done under the management of Tony Wolcott . Labor, including the building of the retaining walls and raised beds, soil placement and planting could be part of a community work project ,perhaps a Rebuilding Together Project. The more the community (both Albany and the non-Albany visitors put into it the more it will be appreciated and respected.

Concept by Francesco Papalia, Albany Waterfront Committee Member

Planting Design by Tony Wolcott, City of Albany Arborist



Cove Approach



Cove and Oasis Area



Triangle



Eucalyptus lehmanii - Bushy Yate – height only 12-20 feet spread as wide,

beautiful small tough Eucalyptus - 2 or 3



Myoporum laetum - the toughest of the tough, prune to a shade tree not a huge haystack,



Heteromeles arbutifolia (Toyon), left, and *Freemontedendron*, right, try as under story plants.



East Side of Triangle facing the Cove.



Northside of Triangle with path to Bulb.



South side of Triangle next to access road.

Take a soil sample of this area. Construct two four foot walls out of urbanite, one wall on the low east side and one wall midway in order to terrace the area and allow for mounding of appropriate planting soil.

- Plant material: *Yucca* various species, *Phoenix robellini* - miniature date palm (multi trunk), 1 *Aesculus californica* - California buckeye - multi trunk, a few *Baccharis pilularis* - dwarf coyote bush, various penstemons, *Zauschneria californica* - California fuchsia, a few *Buddleja davidii* - Butterfly bush



Phoenix robellini - miniature date palm (multi trunk)



California buckeye



Baccharis pilularis - dwarf coyote bush



Zauschneria californica - California fuchsia