

**CITY OF ALBANY  
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA  
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda Date: April 19, 2010

Reviewed by: BP

**SUBJECT:** Resolution No 2010-10 accepting the Fern Tiger Associates Final Report: Voices to Vision – A Community Vision for Albany’s Waterfront

**REPORT BY:** Beth Pollard, City Administrator

---

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

That Council adopt Resolution No. 2010-19 accepting the Fern Tiger Associates Report: Voices to Vision – A Community’s Vision for Albany’s Waterfront, to be used as a living document on waterfront planning, and complimenting and expressing gratitude to Fern Tiger Associates.

**BACKGROUND**

In April 2008, the City Council approved contracting with Fern Tiger Associates (FTA) to conduct a community visioning process about the future of the Albany Waterfront. Over the past two years , FTA has conducted an extensive process that includes:

- Research and analysis to establish accurate information about the waterfront and Albany
- Preparation of educational materials, which included mailing a 20-page publication with information about the waterfront to all Albany properties, preparing a model of the waterfront, and developing maps, planning tools, and other items for use in the community engagement sessions
- Community engagement involving small-group activities and discussion
- Interactivity with the public through a website ([www.voicestovision.com](http://www.voicestovision.com)), on-line questionnaire, and posting of responses to inquiries on the website
- Analysis of information received from the research, community engagement and questionnaire processes
- Preparation of a Final Report that synthesizes the outcomes of the various processes into guidelines and recommendations for the future of the waterfront

Fern Tiger presented the report at the City Council meeting of April 5, 2010. She will attend the Council meeting of April 19, 2010 to respond to questions about the report.

## **DISCUSSION**

When the City Council embarked on the visioning process, it indicated its desire to develop a vision from the community at-large that was well grounded in accurate information, objectivity, and broad public involvement.

Throughout the Voices to Vision process, Fern Tiger and her staff dedicated themselves to be thorough in its gathering of information, to be inclusive in its outreach and the public participation, and objective in the analysis and evaluation of the data, perspectives, and other information.

The result is a 100-page Final Report and Recommendations that includes:

- Recommended guidelines on built area and dedicated open space; height limitations; allowable uses within the built area; site design and architectural quality; and financial implications
- Illustrative site concept maps
- The story of the process

Accompanying the report is an 842-page appendix containing detailed history of the process and content of Voices to Vision, including maps, photos, communications, and other materials.

## **ANALYSIS**

Voices to Vision met its objectives to engage the community, provide accurate and thorough information, and to be impartial in its analysis and evaluation. Nearly 1,200 people participated in a community session or questionnaire – more than any other City process in memory.

The visioning process primarily focused on the perspectives of Albany residents, although non-residents were invited to participate in their own engagement session to provide their perspectives.

The recommended guidelines for the built area include allowable uses that differ from currently allowed uses. In accordance with Albany's Measure C, changes in allowed uses of the privately-owned property on the waterfront requires the approval of Albany voters.

At the meeting of April 19, the Council and community will have the opportunity to ask Fern Tiger any final questions about the process or outcome, and offer perspectives on any follow up actions or activities in the short or long range.

Staff recommends adoption of the attached resolution accepting the report as a living document on waterfront planning that can help inform and guide the City, community, other public agencies, and property owners into the future.

Staff further recommends that Fern Tiger be complimented and thanked for the tremendous effort she and her staff dedicated to preparing this report, as well as for her creativity, thoroughness, and trustworthiness.

### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT**

Voices to Vision extensively engaged the community and both considered and included sustainability factors into the recommended guidelines.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

None from adoption of the report.

### **Attachments**

- Resolution No. 2010-19
- Executive Summary
- Written public comments received between April 6 and 13, 2010
- The full report and appendix are available at [www.voicestovision.com](http://www.voicestovision.com); one copy is available for public viewing at the Albany Library and one copy is available at City Hall; electronic and paper copies are available for purchase at Copy Express on Solano Avenue