

## An excerpt from the April 2010 report “A Community Vision for Albany’s Waterfront”

*\* Throughout the Voices to Vision process, the “waterfront” was described as the 190 acres, west of I80/580 from the Berkeley border to the Richmond border. This includes 88 acres of already-designated public open space and 102 acres of privately owned property, currently used for Golden Gate Fields Racetrack. Although the guidelines included in this section of the report focus on the 102-acre portion of the site, it was important to consider the broader context of Albany’s waterfront when gathering community perspectives and making appropriate recommendations. The recommended guidelines include the addition of 75 acres (minimum) of new dedicated open space which combine with the existing adjacent 88 acres of Albany’s waterfront to create a total of 163 acres of public green space.*

*Given the desire of the vast majority of Albany residents to ensure that any change to the current use of the waterfront property (190 acres) preserve a significant amount of tax revenue for the city, every effort has been made to calculate and analyze the potential municipal income stream from the uses residents appear to support for the property. That said, and with information provided by numerous experts, the following should be understood when reviewing the guidelines:*

- the desires of many Albany residents with regard to “ideal uses” restrict options that might support the tax revenue they hope to generate;*
- Voices to Vision focused solely on the 190-acre waterfront and lacked the resources to analyze the potential for tax generation on non-waterfront property throughout the city of Albany;*
- the vision and site guidelines attempt to reconcile what the community hopes the waterfront can be, with the community’s expressed desires for tax revenue, creating a difficult blend (As a result, several illustrations and descriptions of possible applications of the guidelines, to the 27-acres of potential built area, indicate scenarios that might be “ideal” with regard to the community vision, but not reflecting conventional wisdom about development synergies);*
- all economic data is estimated and preliminary; given the conceptual nature of the process (and the city’s desire to understand the community’s “vision”), market feasibility and development costs were not analyzed.*

# RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES<sup>1</sup>

## 1. Built Area and Dedicated Open Space

“Built” footprint (including associated circulation, roads, and parking) of any commercial or public structures (excluding amenities related directly to park activities) should not exceed a total of 27 acres (26% of the total land area of the site).

The minimum amount of new dedicated public open space shall be 75 acres (74% of the total land area of the site). Public open space includes:

- wetlands (minimum of 10 acres, intended to be restored)
- roads/parking to support public access to new/existing open space/park at the waterfront
- public restrooms
- Bay Trail sited near shoreline plus additional trails, bike paths, and related bike parking
- boardwalk at wetlands
- shuttle stop to downtown Albany
- areas for athletic activities (e.g., soccer, tennis, basketball, etc.)

It is recommended that all built structures conform to the following standards:

- minimum 300’ setback from shoreline at Fleming Point
- minimum 100’ setback from shoreline north and south of Fleming Point
- No buildings (or associated circulation, roads, parking) should extend beyond the “building area” limits (indicated on the diagram to the right of this page), with the exception of any necessary access roads as determined by public safety officials.
- No retail development on Fleming Point.

## 2. Height Limitations

- No structure shall exceed three stories (or 40’, whichever is smaller) in height.

## 3. Allowable Uses within Built Area

- Hotel (minimum 100 rooms; maximum 300 rooms, except as noted below)<sup>2</sup>
- Restaurants, Bars, and Cafes<sup>3</sup>
- Conference Center, Meeting Facilities, and Related Support Structures
- Retail (which could include non-hotel-related restaurants, bars, and cafes) (maximum of 250,000 net SF space<sup>4</sup>)

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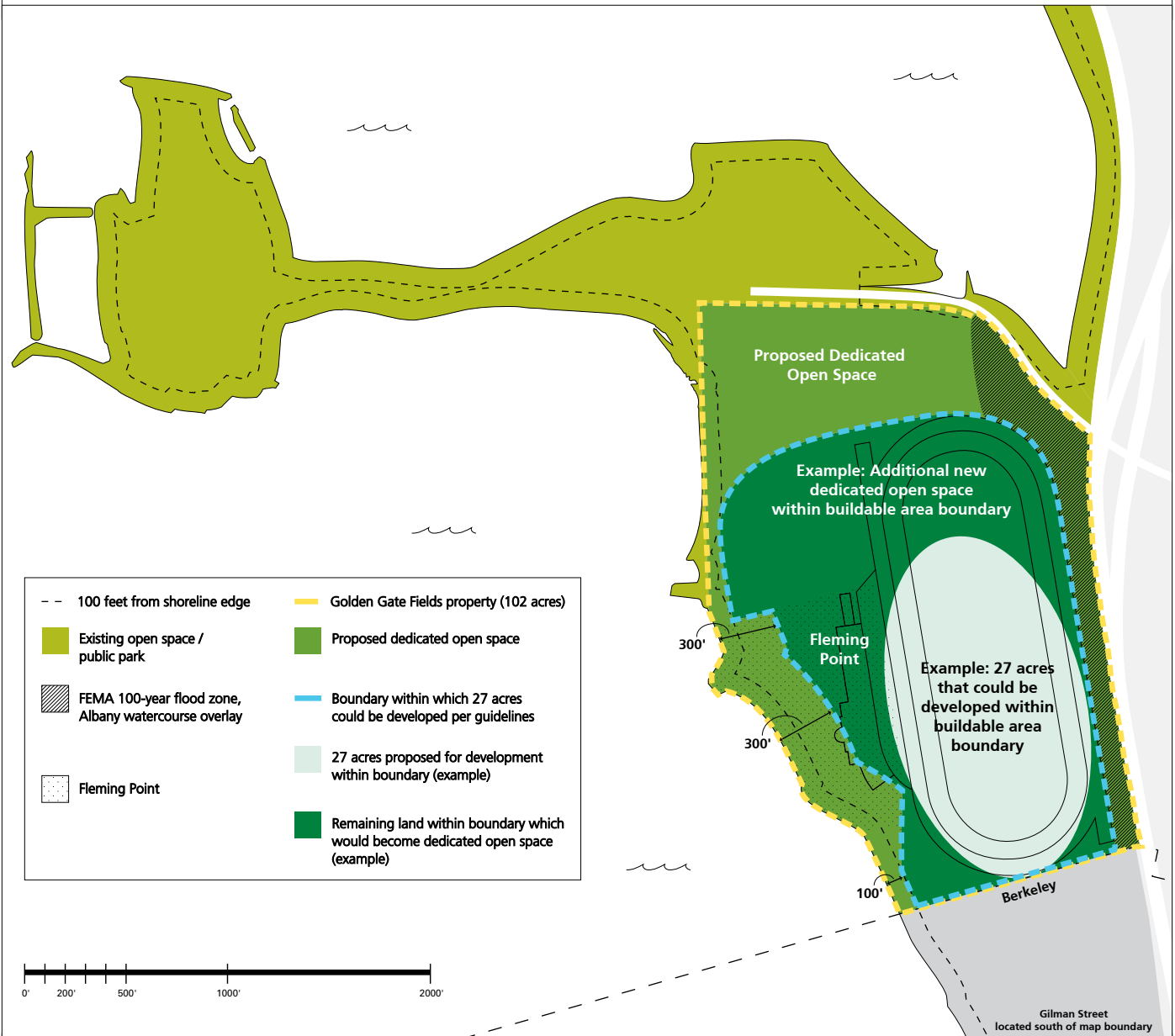
1. These guidelines focus on the 102 acres currently used by GGF. Beyond any guidelines set by the city of Albany, it is understood that numerous public agencies have regulatory responsibility for the site. These guidelines are not intended to override those regulations.

2. In order for a developer to be permitted to construct retail uses at the site, a hotel must be constructed; eco-hotel preferred. Hotel could increase to 400 rooms, but any increase beyond 300, triggers the reduction of the amount of allowable retail.

3. Albany desires restaurants/cafes featuring locally-grown, organic foods (ideally grown at on-site community gardens); mix of restaurant types encouraged (e.g., high end, casual, family focus, cafes, view, etc.)

4. Community preference to limit retail area to minimum required for economic viability; “big box” prohibited; locally-owned retail encouraged, especially those not adversely affecting other Albany retail; outdoor/water recreation retail/rentals desired

# DIAGRAM: NEW OPEN SPACE AND BUILDABLE AREAS OF SITE



This diagram is intended to illustrate the proportion of potential built area (27 acres out of 190 acres) within the total waterfront property. As indicated, the guidelines restrict "development" from 163 acres (86%) of the current waterfront property (including 75 acres or 74% of the current GGF property); allowing "development" on only 27 acres (14% of the total waterfront zone or 26% of the current GGF property) within particular boundaries that exclude any buildings from areas adjacent to the shore, at the northern end of GGF property, or in the FEMA 100-year flood area. This diagram is for illustrative purposes only.

## RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES continued

Within the 27 acres where built development is permitted (per above), a minimum of three acres shall be dedicated to the community for the creation of one or more of the following public educational amenities:

- museum
- aquarium
- interpretive center
- amphitheater (or other performance/arts venues)
- other educational, cultural, environmental, or similar purpose uses

#### 4. Site Design and Architectural Quality

- All buildings to be LEED-certified and/or GreenPoint Rated.
- All built structures to have photovoltaics and/or native plant landscaping on roofs.
- Potential for cogeneration and tri-generation to be developed.
- Development of open space and buildings to take into account potential rise in sea level.
- All parking areas and roads to be pervious pavement, draining toward Bay; runoff to be directed toward drainage swales for natural filtration.
- Gray water recovery systems to store and distribute reclaimed water for landscape irrigation where possible; native/other naturally drought-resistant plants in other areas.
- Transportation and access improvement to be addressed, including shuttle service to Solano and San Pablo avenues and BART, as appropriate.
- Existing fishing pier to be renovated.
- Creation of alternative energy (wind, solar, etc.) throughout site required, as appropriate.
- Water recreation to be supported through opportunities for equipment rentals, storage, restrooms, etc.
- Buildings to be designed to respect the site, with contextually-appropriate materials and colors; to preserve views; to restore and improve natural features; to respond to solar orientation; and prevailing winds for natural ventilation
- Site development should support the primary objective of open space, preservation, and outdoor recreation, while enhancing the unique qualities of the waterfront
- Award-winning architectural and landscape design

#### 5. Financial Implications

- Developer will be expected to provide funds for the acquisition, development, and ongoing maintenance of new dedicated public open space at the waterfront, in direct proportion to the amount of building (sq. ft) approved by the city
- Developer expected to provide funds dedicated to the creation of a public education amenity (described above), in addition to the set-aside of three acres for this purpose
- Every effort will be made by the developer to assist the city in replacing its temporary loss of tax revenues during demolition and construction of new uses at the site.