

City of Albany | Waterfront Committee

# **A Vision for the Future of Albany's Waterfront**

**Status Report: May 6 to September 15, 2008  
Voices to Vision**

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*“The urban waterfront gains its identity, to a great extent, from its condition as an “edge.” It is the boundary between one world and another, the ultimate demarcation of the city and of the land. It is a transitional space that holds great latent potential – the suggestion of adventure, of settling in; of embarking, of arriving; of entering into and coming out of. It is the juxtaposition of the realm of land with that of water, and the heightening of the contrast between the two, that uniquely characterizes and defines the urban waterfront.”*

- Remaking the Urban Waterfront, Urban Land Institute

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## B A C K G R O U N D

In May 2008, Fern Tiger Associates<sup>1</sup> (FTA) was selected to work with the city of Albany<sup>2</sup>, through its Waterfront Committee, to design and implement a program to engage the broad Albany community in a participatory process to consider the future of the waterfront. While Albany had experienced other efforts, over the past several decades, to look at possibilities for the waterfront – either as a single parcel or for parts of the property – these prior endeavors had never been driven by the city itself.

To begin this process, FTA did extensive background research into the recent history of both the waterfront and the issues that had become the focus of various attempts to develop the property – in part and in its entirety – for public benefit and for commercial uses. During these first four formative months, FTA also conducted a series of approximately 70 one-on-one interviews with a broad cross-section of Albany residents, opinion leaders, community and business leaders, elected officials, city staff, waterfront stakeholders, and individuals with a history of involvement with the waterfront property. Additionally, FTA interviewed numerous individuals who contacted the firm expressing interest in the process as well as individuals mentioned frequently by other interviewees. These interviews (all facilitated in-person and lasting between 60 and 140 minutes each) helped to provide an overview and “scan” of the thinking and attitudes prevalent across the city. FTA sought out as wide and as representative a scope of attitudes and opinions as possible and heard views from across the spectrum – advocates for open space, for tax-producing ventures, for safety and access, for environmental protection and restoration, as well as advocates for the status quo. FTA also heard from residents who have thought about ideas for unique and innovative uses for the waterfront – ranging from windmills to an aquarium and nature center to an amusement park. Although the interview questions were not focused on ideas for the waterfront, many interviewees had compelling arguments that should be considered as part of a meaningful community process.

But most important, this very preliminary phase of work was focused on understanding effective ways to bring people who do not usually participate in civic dialogue into the process and determining the best strategies to create a process that will, in fact, be (and will also be perceived by all, to be) open, honest, informative, respectful, and productive.

As part of the background research FTA has conducted for this first phase of the project, staff

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Fern Tiger Associates (FTA) is an Oakland, California-based consulting firm, working primarily with public and nonprofit organizations. Since 1978, FTA has been dedicated to bringing about positive social change by providing individuals and organizations with an unusual array of services and skills focused on: advocacy documentation; organizational effectiveness; research and public policy; strategic outreach and communications; and civic engagement.

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See appendix: Qualifications Statement, Proposed Process; Approved Scope of Work

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has gone through more than 5,000 pages of reports and plans relating to the waterfront, dating back nearly 50 years. These reports and papers were invaluable in determining the current state of knowledge on waterfront issues, what information can be relied upon during subsequent phases of this project, and what information is out of date and should be updated with more current studies.

This early work was seen as a critical first step toward designing, and ultimately implementing, a thoughtful, timely, and strategic outreach, communication, and public education plan, and for building support for the engagement process that will unfold in subsequent months. Additionally, this work was intended to form the base for both understanding the unique characteristics and history of Albany and its institutions, as well as to ensure that both outreach and engagement would reflect the community's values as the city plans for the future of the lands commonly referred to as *the Albany waterfront*.

Since FTA's work scope includes broad thinking about the design of a process for community participation and engagement, much of the conversation with interviewees focused on ways to engage the community, unique aspects of Albany life, and obstacles to engagement specifically related to the history of the waterfront.

**Phase One: May 6 - September 15, 2008** (Phase One is scheduled to go from May '08 through January '09; this report reflects work and status through September 15, 2008)

Over the past four and one-half months, FTA has:

- ▶ conducted 70+ one-on-one, in-person interviews (see "Interviews" in Appendix) with electeds, city staff, community and business leaders, environmentalists, educators, etc. (interviewees reflect geographic, ethnic, economic, and age diversity within the city of Albany). While not noted specifically, FTA has also had numerous more casual conversations with other Albany residents who also shared their thoughts and observations;
- ▶ reviewed more than 5,000 pages of documents provided by the city as well as by interviewees (see "Document Review" in Appendix), including extensive documentation preserved over the years by residents, interviewees, regulatory bodies, etc;
- ▶ observed all Waterfront Committee meetings (May - September, 2008);
- ▶ observed City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, select neighborhood meetings, and other gatherings;
- ▶ reviewed previous public processes intended to guide a vision for the Albany waterfront;
- ▶ reviewed press and media related to Albany and the Albany waterfront for the past year; reviewed waterfront-related websites, Albany blogs; etc. and maintained ongoing review of press, blogs, and other sources of information;
- ▶ visited and photographed the Albany waterfront at different times of day, climates, vantage points; attended and photographed Albany events and activities (including, but not limited to National Night Out; Solano Stroll; Music in the Park, Pancake Breakfast, etc.);

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- ▶ analyzed and synthesized information gathered from interviews and meetings;
- ▶ evaluated how Albany residents get information about local issues;
- ▶ reviewed diverse outreach strategies and assessed potential options to maximize participation of the Albany community;
- ▶ brainstormed possible names and branding for the Albany Waterfront visioning process, to enable the process to be known and recognized by the public;
- ▶ reviewed census and other demographic data;
- ▶ reviewed preliminary data related to economic issues impacting city budget and budget planning for city;
- ▶ reviewed current land use issues confronting the city, including Safeway, University Village, Whole Foods, etc.
- ▶ determined preliminary list of “facts” that need to be known as well as “definitions” that the community needs in order to understand and to best participate in the process;
- ▶ developed evolving list of Frequently Asked Questions for use in publications;
- ▶ defined preliminary content framework for “public education campaign” to precede actual participatory process;
- ▶ designed community outreach strategy and options for community engagement intended to prompt greater understanding of both the opportunities and challenges facing the development of a vision for the Albany waterfront; and
- ▶ researched best practices related to waterfront development and planning.

FERN TIGER ASSOCIATES

FINDINGS  
&  
OBSERVATIONS

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## FINDINGS/ OBSERVATIONS

September 2008

The following findings and observations are based on research conducted over the first few months of Phase One work, including: focused contact with approximately 70 people representing a broad cross section of Albany, including, but not limited to community, business, school, and government leaders; observations of public meetings; a review of current and prior year press and media coverage of both the Waterfront and other Albany issues; examination of historical documents obtained from the city and other sources; environmental and financial reports; regional park plans that affect Albany; best practices in waterfront development from regional and national sources; and review of census and other demographic data, as well as preliminary information related to economic issues impacting the city budget.

While a majority of these findings may not provide completely new information to the Albany community, the full range of information gathered is reflected here to provide the appropriate contextual framework for recommendations related to communications and preliminary thoughts for a community engagement process, as well as content for community outreach and public education – leading to an in-depth, results-oriented participatory process.

The findings have been organized into eight broad categories:

- ▶ The Albany Community
- ▶ The Waterfront
- ▶ At the Waterfront
- ▶ Informing the Dialogue
- ▶ Contradictions Abound
- ▶ Politics and Polemics
- ▶ The “Hot Button” Issues
- ▶ Outreach and Communication



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## THE ALBANY COMMUNITY

*"I'd rather rent in Albany than own somewhere else in the Bay Area. I chose Albany for the schools and I'm staying until my youngest is finished with high school."*

*"I like the fact that we have relatively small houses on relatively small lots. It creates a walkability that not many other places have."*

*"It's a walkable town; it's a working class town. Most of the people on my block are nurses and teachers – all working class, union jobs."*

*"Albany has changed a lot. It used to be more blue collar, but now a much younger set of dual-income couples have moved in for the schools and the proximity to employment centers like San Francisco. So it's a different place now."*

*"We're like a big neighborhood inside a city."*

*"Real estate values in Albany far exceed the quality of the housing stock or the amount of land you get, but people think it's worth the sacrifice to get good schools and good services."*

*"It has a small town feeling, but at the same time, it's quite a sophisticated little place. We have a wonderful cultural richness on tap. It's a "best of all worlds" kind of place."*

*"Everything is small, human scale. Even our main street, Solano Avenue, is only one or two stories high."*

*"In the Village, they're there to get their degrees and they really do not want to be distracted from that."*

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Located on just 1.7 square miles, Albany, with a population of about 17,000<sup>3</sup> (roughly 7,000 households) is described by residents as one of the last communities in the metropolitan region to offer a family-friendly lifestyle; excellent schools; convenient location with easy access to employment and cultural activities; and a genuine neighborhood feeling. There remains a sense that it's a community where you know and care about your neighbors, and where it is easy to get involved if you seek out opportunities.

But, it is also a community that has changed over the past 15-20 years, with an influx of "newcomers," rising property values, more diversity, and more concerted efforts to define Albany as distinct and apart from its neighbor communities.

Some feel that the city has "changed" in ways that are reflected by increased technology and less "over-the-fence" communication; by more listservs and e-trees and fewer small group gatherings and on-the-street chats. Still residents mention that they always "run into people" when they shop, bike, walk, or just stand outside their house, and that the ease of friendships is retained, and interviewees proclaim that when it comes to controversial issues (like the waterfront) they are unsure of what many of their neighbors think. Like in many other small communities, information is shared in informal public settings – the hair salon, at the bulletin board on Solano Avenue, and when picking up and dropping off children at schools and activities.

There are still residents who can trace their life history within Albany – who have raised their children here, and whose children are now raising their own families in Albany. It's a "location of choice" for newcomers and long-term residents alike.

*"Historically, I don't think there's been much of a connection between the Village and the city."*

Within the city boundaries are two distinct sub-groups which are often described as disenfranchised from the rest of the city proper – residents at University Village and at Bridgewater, Gateview, and Bayside condominiums. Many of these residents are renters. University Village residents are students at UC Berkeley – seen by many in the community as short-termers and non-voters (although many students actually live in the Village for four to six years pursuing doctorates and during their time at UC see Albany as 'home') – focused on schools and young families. However, many send their children to Albany schools and are quite passionate about issues that impact their lives. Residents of the three condo complexes (many of whom are renters) are often assumed to be uninterested and uninvolved, unless the issue directly affects their buildings.

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More than 60% Caucasian; 25% Asian (vs. 10% CA); 8% Latino (vs. 32% CA); 4% African American; 3% other; nearly 6% from two or more races. About 14% of the city's population is Chinese. Thirty-six percent speak a foreign language at home; 14% self report they do not speak English well. About 33% of households have children under 18 living at home. About 23% of the population is under the age of 18; 7% are 18 to 24; 35% are 25 to 44; 24% are 45 to 64; and 11% are 65 years or older. The median age was 36 in the last census year, 2000.

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While the overall perception is that Albany is a city of homeowners with small lots, the reality is that nearly 50% of all housing units are rentals – higher than both the state (43%) and nation (34%).

Despite the self-described “small town atmosphere,” Albany – like other communities in the Bay Area – either exhibits, or worries about, many of the same issues usually attributed to larger, more urban areas including public safety, traffic, crowded schools, and aging public facilities. But Albany boasts unusual pride in community and a surprisingly strong Albany “identity,” in spite of its location between – and in the midst of – larger, better known communities, most specifically Berkeley.

*“The schools are the heart of the community – the real anchors.”*

*“My main motivation in caring about what goes on in the city is my concern with the long-term financial stability of the city and the school district. That affects all of us and it impacts our property values.”*

*“Albany needs development because we’re the smallest and the weakest city in the region, and we need to look out for our own interests.”*

*“We have a tax structure that’s flat and regressive. We fund things with parcel taxes and that means that a 3,000 sq. ft. house and a 300 sq. ft. condo pay the same tax. That’s not fair.”*

### *Managing the city; managing the schools – financing the city; financing the schools.*

The city and many residents boast stability in the day-to-day management of the city, despite a self-described contentious elected council, and in recent years more quarrelsome electoral races. While the majority of interviewees appear to believe the city’s finances are dependable, some feel budgeting is not based on a realistic look at the broader, current economic situation and its impact on local municipalities (e.g. decrease in numbers of house sales impacting transfer tax funds; declining house values prompting re-evaluation of property tax; drops in retail transactions; business closures; fragility of small retail stores; etc.).

Many long-term residents recall a time when Albany was “different,” while newer residents (especially young families) feel the city has been improved by their active involvement, their enthusiasm, their support, and their willingness to be proactive and innovative – yet respectful of the community’s history. On many issues long-term residents and newcomers agree, and share pride in the city’s accomplishments, although a “political or cultural or issues split” is mentioned often, when it comes to ideas about the future of the city and of the waterfront area.

The schools are nearly unanimously seen as “golden” and “sacred” by residents with school-age children, as well as those without, and the leadership of the schools is viewed as less argumentative than city council. While schools in most other cities are perceived as challenged – especially in light

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of federal and state mandates, minimal flexibility with limited resources, and lack of a united front among its leadership – Albany residents appear proud of the schools and discuss challenges in terms of raising funds for special programs, finding adequate space for programs, and maintaining standards expected by the community. The goodwill residents show for the schools is not always extended to city government, although the school district describes its relationship with the city as productive and strong.

The schools remain a major focus of city residents, both in terms of the city's identity and what draws people to locate and remain in Albany.

Like many communities - especially those with a high per capita of residents with college degrees<sup>4</sup> - Albany residents value education and see the importance of strong public schools. But, there is little understanding about the realities of how California schools are financed, and how Albany schools fit into this picture – including the impact and percent of financing that comes from local property taxes, parcel taxes, and bond measures, and the amount paid by Golden Gate Fields.

In some ways there appear to be two different active populations within the city – often, but not necessarily overlapping: those who focus on the schools and those who focus on citywide issues. At times, issues merge and there is a perception that more long-term residents (with grown children) focus on citywide issues and those who are newer residents (with young children) are more concerned with schools than with the city as a whole.

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According to 2000 Census data, 64% of the city's residents over the age of 25 are college graduates (as compared with 26% statewide); 34% hold graduate or professional degrees.

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*“As a city, we don’t really know who we are or what we’re about.”*

*“I don’t think the city has a vision for the future. Saying that we want good schools and that we like the small town feeling is not a vision. It’s not strategic and it doesn’t really guide decisionmaking.”*

*“There’s a group of people here in Albany who never met a bond measure they didn’t like. Maybe they bought their houses years ago and pay very low taxes, so it doesn’t impact them.. but it definitely impacts me.”*

### ***Community values; city vision***

Even among active residents, there is a sense that despite numerous efforts and initiatives to stake out a future and an identity for Albany, there is not a shared long-term “vision.” Mostly residents “describe” the status quo, but cannot articulate a vision for the future of the city.

When asked to describe the strategies Albany has put into place to meet its vision, most residents have trouble thinking beyond the present, and believe that the city has neither formulated nor disseminated a “vision” for the city. At best, residents rely on saying that strong schools and safe neighborhoods are the crux of life for Albany. Still, Albany has distinguished itself for being intentionally “green” and at the forefront of numerous environmental measures that benefit residents.

There is a perception that Albany is progressive politically – supportive of environmental measures and willing to pay taxes to maintain or improve quality of life, as well as education. People profess to shop locally and to consciously support local businesses whenever possible.

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## THE WATERFRONT

*“The Albany Waterfront needs to be exemplary. It needs to set a standard for urban waterfront interface.”*

*“I would love to see some linkage, some connection, some reason to go there. There’s nothing there for the average person now.”*

*“We have a really incredible opportunity to have a great park that would connect to other park areas and habitat areas, and to have a great shoreline that’s publicly used and available and open.”*

*“There needs to be some kind of way for the access to be easy, like a pedestrian walkway, some way for people to get to it by bicycle or on foot, without having to drive there.”*

*“I would want to take it back 150 years and return it to how it was when there were wetlands, which would protect us if we ever get a nasty earthquake and tidal waves... to preserve the animals that belong there, no cars – maybe bike parking. Just leave the land alone to restore itself. I don’t really want a nice green little park with some flowers. I want native plants, native animals, native birds – a native environment.”*

Albany’s city limits include a broad expanse of shoreline, commonly referred to as the *Albany Waterfront*. These 140 acres of shoreline property within the Albany city limits include 60 acres of public parcels owned by the city and the Eastshore State Park and 80 acres of privately-held land – on which Golden Gate Fields (GGF) Race Track operates. The GGF grandstand was built on Fleming Point – previously an island at the edge of the original east shore salt marsh – which was once used by dynamite factories. To create the actual racetrack and the north parking lot, the top of Fleming Point was removed and the debris was used to fill the marsh.

Since the 1960s, when all of this land belonged to the Santa Fe Railroad, there have been numerous attempts at development for both private and public uses. As surprising as it seems from today’s perspective, residents owe the existence of the public lands to their former use - a landfill used as a dump primarily for debris from construction and demolition projects. The site operated as a landfill for two decades – from 1963 to 1983 – and construction debris created the Plateau, the Neck, and the Bulb as well as some of the GGF land on the north east corner of the race track property.

In the ‘60s and ‘70s, there were several attempts to develop the waterfront, including the bulb, with plans that included landfill islands in the Bay, boat marinas, a “boatel,” restaurants, and miles of walking paths. These proposals were defeated – first by regional water quality and coastal commissions and then by Albany residents themselves who questioned the financial feasibility.

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Since the 1940s, there have been three owners of the GGF property: Santa Fe/Catellus, Ladbroke Inc. (England), and now Canadian-based Magna Entertainment Corporation (MEC). Since the 1980s, when race track attendance started to decline, each race track owner has tried multiple times to develop the land for more intensive uses including housing, office, retail, and entertainment. Each time, the proposal was either rejected or withdrawn in the face of stiff opposition by both Albany residents and regional proponents of open space and/or more limited development.

One such proposal – put forth in the 1980s by Santa Fe Realty Corporation – prompted an extensive planning process (and an EIR) that ultimately looked at seven different development alternatives ranging from 300,000 sq. ft. of commercial development with 128 acres of open space to 4.5 million sq. ft. of commercial/recreational development with 72 acres of open space. Only one of the alternatives envisioned the track remaining on the property. The process of environmental study, public reaction, and proposal revision for this project took six years, exacerbated existing community divisions about the best use of the land, and ultimately resulted in the passage of Measure C in 1990 – which froze the waterfront zoning of the waterfront, by requiring direct voter approval of any zoning changes on the waterfront, from that point forward.

In 1994, the new operator of GGF, Ladbroke Inc. attempted to get approval to increase gambling at the race track with the addition of a cardroom. A proposal for the cardroom was put on the ballot, where it was narrowly approved. The measure was later defeated in a law suit that ultimately resulted in the card room not being built.

In the early 2000s, after more than a decade of planning, negotiation, and citizen advocacy, the Eastshore State Park (ESSP) was created – including most of the undeveloped lands formerly owned by Santa Fe RR – from Richmond to Emeryville – as well as the Plateau and Beach (north and northwest of GGF). The Bulb is planned to be part of ESSP but is currently under city control.

Since purchasing GGF in 1999, Magna Entertainment Corporation initiated development proposals twice. The original proposal, in 2002, called Rancho San Antonio, envisioned 800,000 sq. ft. of retail, entertainment, and lodging development on Fleming Point. The most recent attempt at development came to an end in 2006 when MEC's development partner, Caruso Affiliated, withdrew a proposal to build a retail/entertainment center and shoreline park on Fleming Point and GGF's northern parking lot. This most recent proposal is described by some as increasing the contentious atmosphere in Albany and of polarizing the community in ways more extreme than ever before.

By virtue of its special location at the edge of the Bay and the physical isolation imposed by the Buchanan Street I-80/580 interchange, the Albany Waterfront has always been treated as separate from the rest of the city and as an entity all its own, despite the importance of understanding the property in the context of the city as a whole – environmentally, fiscally, aesthetically, and politically. What happens on the waterfront has the potential to affect every aspect of the city from the schools to local businesses to the city's identity as a green and unique community.

The waterfront can remain a focus of contention and an isolated place of which few residents feel “ownership,” or it can become an expression of the city's values and vision.

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## AT THE WATERFRONT

*“There are more dogs than people at the Bulb. Why would I go there if I don’t have a dog?”*

*“It’s an amazing cultural resource.”*

*“I think it’s the most beautiful place in the world.”*

*“The landfill operator was on his own, trying to make as much profit as possible. The net result is that it wasn’t an “engineered fill,” so the fill itself is really decrepit.”*

*“None of my friends at Albany High ever go to the waterfront. What would you do there?”*

### **The Bulb**

The Albany Bulb is a fascinating, unique, and challenging place. It is passionately embraced by dog-walkers, artists, educators, and hikers for its wildness, isolation, and the creativity it has inspired in the people that are drawn there. But it is also dismissed with equal passion by others who describe it as chaotic, dangerous, abandoned public land – with overgrown construction rubble that is difficult to navigate. An active community of local artists has built large found-object art sculptures and paintings in an open-air “gallery” on the north side of the Bulb. Smaller sculptures, paintings, and home-made structures – including a library and a two-story castle, complete with spiral stair and roof deck – can be found throughout the property. For many years the Bulb has been under a lease agreement with the Eastshore State Park, but no significant progress has been made to officially incorporate the land into the park. In the meantime, the land is under Albany’s jurisdiction. Despite numerous concerns, the site has been relatively safe.

### **The Plateau**

The Plateau is an elevated, flat portion of land north of Buchanan Street. It is part of the Albany section of the Eastshore State Park. The eastern section and northern shoreline are prime spots for bird watching on the protected Albany mudflats fed by Cordonices Creek. The central and western parts of the Plateau are mostly open field – now dominated by a fenced-off habitat for burrowing owls. This artificial habitat was created as mitigation for the destruction of an owl burrow on the site of what is now the Tom Bates Regional Ball Fields – immediately south of the race track, in the city of Berkeley.



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### **The Neck**

The narrow spit of land between the Plateau and the Bulb immediately west of the end of Buchanan Street is called “the neck.” Albany owns the central part of the neck while the shoreline – on the north and south sides of the neck – is part of the Eastshore State Park.

### **The Beach**

The Albany Beach at the northwestern edge of the GGF north parking lot is public land. It is owned by the State, but is listed as part of the Eastshore State Park in the Park’s resource summary. It is a popular place for dogs and kids, and the only easily accessible shoreline on the Albany Waterfront.

### **The Bay Trail**

One of the major gaps in the 400-mile Bay Trail <sup>5</sup> is within the Albany city limits. The trail was envisioned as a link between the shoreline parklands and the waterfronts of the entire Bay, and as a bicycle commuter corridor. Although agreement has seemed to be close on a number of occasions, as of the writing of this report, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG)<sup>6</sup> and East Bay Regional Park District continue to be in negotiation with Magna Entertainment Corp. (MEC), the owners of Golden Gate Fields, to obtain a permanent right-of-way along the shoreline. For now, bicyclists and pedestrians meander through an unmaintained section of the privately-owned GGF northern parking lot to cross the Albany waterfront. Every plan for the waterfront has stressed the need to close this gap in the Bay Trail, but final decisions regarding this are largely out of the hands of Albany residents.

*“Golden Gates Field is the biggest employer, the biggest tax payer, and they really give generously to local activities.”*

*“Racetracks lose money. They have to have casinos or commercial development to supplement track earnings. It’s not a sport that is in people’s lives any more.”*

*“The race track is a god-awful structure. If there was nothing there, would anyone vote to put that on the waterfront?”*

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According to ABAG website, Bay Trail Fact Sheet, 240 miles of the trail have been completed.

6

Association of Bay Area Government (ABAG) website: <http://baytrail.abag.ca.gov/generalfacts.html>

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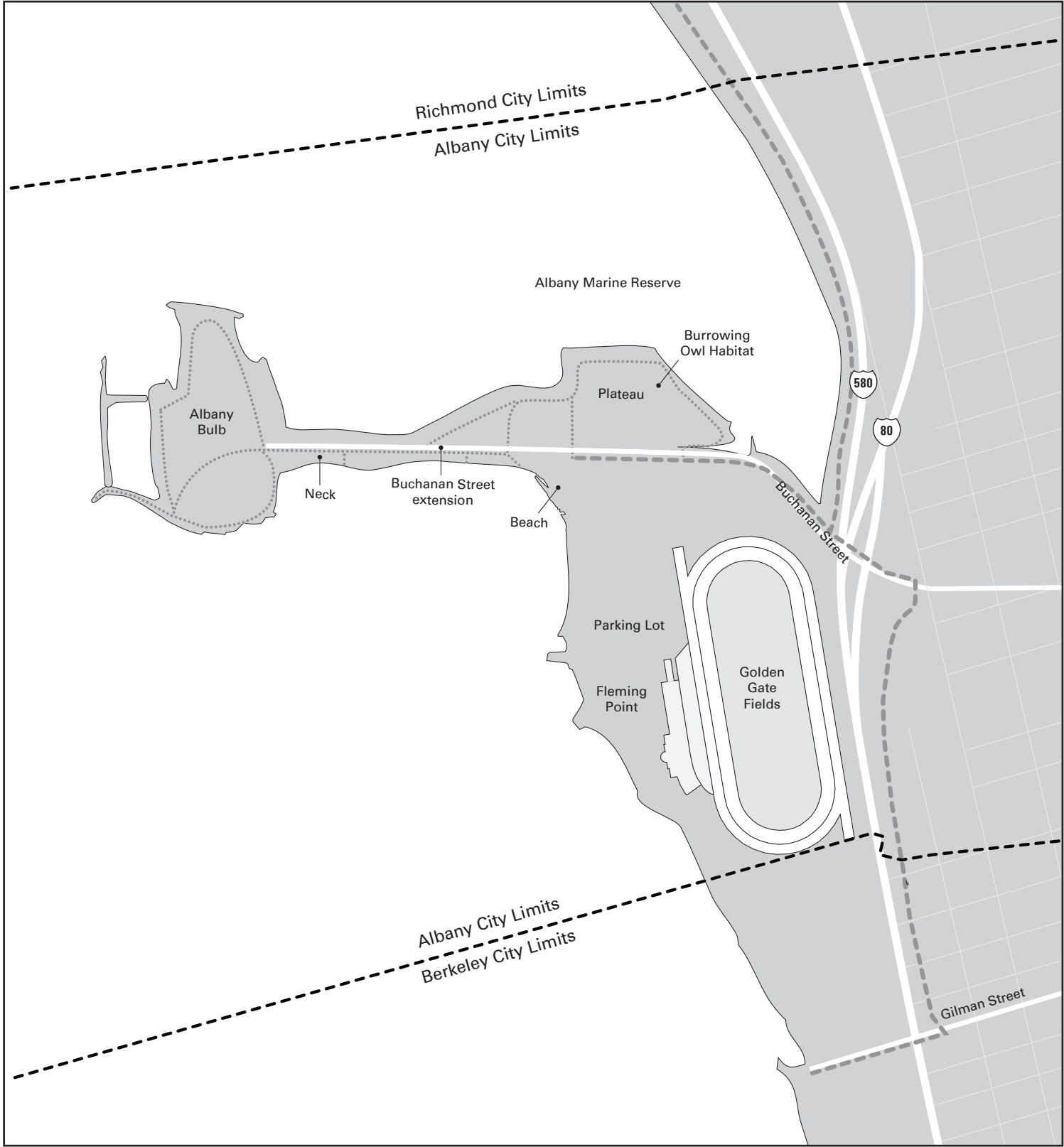
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## **Golden Gate Fields**

Golden Gate Fields has operated continuously as a thoroughbred horse racing track since the end of World War II. It is the largest single piece of privately held land in Albany and dominates the city's waterfront. Despite declining track attendance and significant annual losses by the parent company MEC in the last 5 years, GGF reports that it is profitable, plans to significantly increase the number of racing days in 2009, and stresses that it will continue operating the track for the foreseeable future.

Some residents view the track as a venerable Albany institution and a good community member. They note the track's long-term support of community-based institutions such as the YMCA, the Albany Senior Center, and the Albany Education Foundation. Track supporters also note the continued importance to the city, school, and library coffers from taxes (property tax, wagering tax, parcel tax) paid by GGF. Detractors of GGF describe it as an eye-sore that under-performs financially, producing relatively little in city revenues and meager charitable contributions in comparison to the size of the property and the total revenues the track generates. (Wagering tax revenues are collected on bets placed physically at GGF, but not on bets placed at off-track betting locations.) Because of these basic disagreements, any process will need to obtain the current, verifiable data on tax revenues and other financial contributions from GGF.



# Albany Shoreline



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## INFORMING THE DIALOGUE BUILDING THE TRUST

*“The most important thing and also the hardest thing is going to be to get people to trust the information. There has been so much misinformation and contradictory information. I just don’t even know if it’s possible to get people to believe any information they get from anyone.”*

*“Some people think they know everything about the waterfront. That intimidates others, and then those people don’t want to participate.”*

*“This is a community of smart people. If they get information that is unbiased and logical, they will read it and they will bone up on facts. People will need to understand a lot about the Waterfront site if they want to participate and stand up to some people who try to intimidate everyone into thinking they are the only ones with answers and information.”*

*“You’ve got to get people to understand the geography and the ownership of the site. They need to understand the impact any changes to that ownership will have on the schools.”*

*“The information that is disseminated will need to be full and complete and cover all the various points of view.”*

*“People need to know the real financial state of this city. Whatever happens at the waterfront needs to generate revenue for the city and for the school district.”*

*“School financing is not understood.”*

*“I think it would help to have accurate financial information, which is going to be difficult for people. There’s a huge credibility problem, because we’ve had so much campaigning and so little information.”*

Despite the intensity of activity surrounding recent proposals related to the waterfront, there remains strong suspicion that residents are not well informed about the issues and challenges of waterfront “development” – be it the creation of a park or the development of commercial ventures. In general, there is the perception that residents are not knowledgeable of important factors impacting decisions about the waterfront – including Measure C, which looms large in the reality of what can and cannot be done at the site.

But perhaps even more relevant is the perception that the information that has been provided to date – from a variety of sources – is neither accurate nor neutral, that even supposed “facts” are manipulated to present biased perspectives that support one concept or destroy another. Even actively involved residents – many of whom are identified as supporting one concept or another – readily admit they know woefully little about the parameters and factors impacting the waterfront and that

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little valid, verifiable data has been disseminated during all of these years. Thus, nearly all interviewees agree that there is a critical need for a thorough, balanced, factual public education effort that should precede and accompany any engagement. Making this a priority would enable a significant portion of residents to participate – with knowledge and the security that they have accurate, substantiated data with which to make decisions and suggestions. Ultimately this would ensure that all potential options could be analyzed systematically and fairly.

Most specifically, interviewees agreed that the following data and categories of information need to be understood by the community at large:

- Site and Surroundings (mentioned most frequently by interviewees)

Specifically interviewees want the public to be informed about the current ownership of the different parcels, the environmental constraints and opportunities for various uses on the site, the geological suitability of each sub-area of the waterfront for different uses, the history of the site, and previous development attempts.

  - Size/location/ownership of each parcel at the waterfront
  - Cordonices Creek - present and historic location
  - Marsh lands - present and historical
  - Bay Trail - current status
  - Accessibility issues
  - Seismic/soil stability of each parcel and impact on development potential
  - Aesthetic and cultural significance
- Land Use/Legal
  - Zoning - current
  - Measure C - overview of the measure, as well as impacts and responsibilities
  - Jurisdiction - state and regional governmental regulatory agencies with oversight of the property
  - State, regional, and local land use regulations, monitoring authorities, etc.
  - Zoning mechanisms
  - Public/private partnership models for ownership and use
  - Current best practices for urban waterfronts
  - Assets and liabilities
- Environment
  - Weather, wind, noise
  - Risk - toxicity of landfill
  - Traffic

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- Air and water quality
- Plants, shorebirds, wildlife
- Natural habitats
- Fiscal
  - Costs for acquisition, demolition, development, and ongoing maintenance costs for open space conversion
  - Potential sources of funding for public purchase and conversion to open space/ parkland
  - GGF revenues and tax contributions to city - current, historical and projections for the next five years, including amounts and percent of budget for city, schools, library
  - Other financial benefits accrued to the city/community from GGF (donations, etc.)
  - Feasibility of, and revenue projections for, any development options, including comparison to current
  - Overall financial picture of city and school funding - current and projected
  - Projected fiscal impacts on existing local retail establishments if waterfront site included retail
- Other factors
  - Quality of life and civic identity: potential for Waterfront to improve social factors
  - Aesthetic considerations - architecture and open space
  - Development options (open space/ parkland, commercial, residential, “green” utility, unique public/private function, nonprofit, other): pros/cons of any options presented

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## CONTRADICTIONS ABOUND

Supposed facts about the waterfront run the gamut in terms of fact and fiction. Given the length of time the issue has been a topic of discussion in the community, it is not surprising that so many people believe they have particular and relevant “facts.” Some of the contradictions we heard include:

- ▶ The Bulb is an amazing environmental resource.
- ▶ The Bulb is composed of dangerous land fill.
  
- ▶ The Bulb is owned by the state.
- ▶ The Bulb is owned by the city of Albany.
- ▶ The Bulb is owned by East Bay Regional Park District.
  
- ▶ No developer will ever be interested in the Waterfront, so Albany should be happy if anyone proposes anything at the site.
- ▶ Developers could make significant profits at the waterfront site, and still leave a large percentage of the property as open space.
  
- ▶ Commercial development of the waterfront will destroy retail business on Solano and San Pablo avenues.
- ▶ Development of the waterfront will strengthen Albany’s retail businesses because the city will become a regional draw.
  
- ▶ Golden Gate Fields contributes significant financial resources to the school district.
- ▶ Taxes paid by Golden Gate Fields are not significant in proportion to the total city budget and school budget and are not in accordance with the scale of the property it owns.
  
- ▶ Golden Gate Fields makes huge contributions to community activities.
- ▶ Golden Gate Fields contributes very small amounts in comparison to its profits.
  
- ▶ Golden Gate Fields property will never be sold.
- ▶ Golden Gate Fields property will definitely be sold in the very near future.

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- ▶ Horse racing is dying.
- ▶ Horse racing will never die.
  
- ▶ The city of Albany would be better off if it had no responsibility for the waterfront property.
- ▶ The waterfront is the most critical resource the city has.
  
- ▶ There's no rush to change anything at the waterfront site.
- ▶ If Albany doesn't do something soon, the community will find itself reacting to proposals from outsiders.
- ▶ Golden Gate Fields is negotiating with the city of Berkeley to develop on their property in Berkeley and then Berkeley will get new tax dollars while Albany continues to stagnate.
  
- ▶ The city's financial position is weak.
- ▶ The city's finances are strong, especially in comparison to neighboring communities.
  
- ▶ Decisions about the waterfront should be made locally (Albany only).
- ▶ The waterfront is a regional issue.
  
- ▶ Planning for the future of the waterfront is an incredible opportunity.
- ▶ Planning for the future of the waterfront is an insurmountable challenge.
  
- ▶ Deciding the future of the waterfront can bring the Albany community together.
- ▶ Deciding the future of the waterfront can only further divide an already contentious community.



## POLITICS AND POLEMICS

*“The politics have gotten ugly. I know people who won’t vote because they can’t believe it’s gotten this bad.”*

*“Albany is now more liberal than Berkeley.”*

*“There’s a core group of about 40 people who are civically engaged in the city and in the schools. They just trade positions. Fundamentally, I’d say they are more alike than they are different.”*

*“My sense is – despite all the hoopla – at the level of broad values, there’s a lot more overlap among people in this town than we’re experiencing.”*

*“I’m as scared of the Sierra Club as I am of some slick California developer.”*

*“A lot of people say their voices aren’t being heard. But mostly it’s people who were heard and didn’t get their way.”*

*“If it wasn’t for all the entrenched interests, we would surely come together as a community.”*

*“There’s maybe 10% of the community – at most, probably less – on either side of the Waterfront conflict and the other 80% just wants us to quit screaming at each other and get something done. At this point I think even the 10% on each side might be close to realizing that we’re not getting anywhere ... just grief and embarrassment and unfortunate consequences.”*

Those who follow city politics, to any degree, are aware of (and often vocal about) schisms and differences within the city and also perceptions about schisms between council and staff . This perception – real or not – has not benefitted any particular faction. Instead it has undermined support for the city as a whole, and has overshadowed the potential for thinking about a cohesive plan for the future. Indeed, residents state that the city has no vision.

To many – inside the city and beyond – there is a sense that politics over the past decade has actually kept Albany from moving forward rather than encouraging innovation and vision to flourish as much as it could, given the resources of the residents and their commitment to the community. Indeed, more than one interviewee expressed “hope” that this engagement process could be the unifying force that the city needs to move beyond factionalism toward respectful dialogue and debate – ultimately building a cohesive vision for the future.

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## THE “HOT BUTTON” ISSUES

*There are basically six issues that define the conversation about the Waterfront – coming from diverse sectors of the population:*

- history of conflict on the issue which has led to a lack of trust in information provided;
- trade-offs necessary between financial needs/expectations and open space;
- reality of whether or not the land is available to purchase or to convert to public use;
- the capacity and interest of the community-at-large to engage in a process to define a vision for the waterfront, given what are described as bitter experiences and results;
- regional and local decisionmaking
- the definition of the waterfront site

*“We’re honest and we’re accurate, but they call us liars and cheats.”*

*“They would sell Yosemite to theme park developers if they could.”*

*“I’ve been a member of the Sierra Club all my adult life – but because I didn’t agree with their plan I was demonized and called ‘pro-development.’”*

### *Lack of Trust/History of Conflict*

There is a wide-spread perception among people actively (and historically) involved in the waterfront, that there are two opposing sides. Each accuse the other of distorting information and claiming to represent far more people than they probably do. Since each side has its own set of information it believes to be accurate, it is difficult for any information to be seen as neutral and factually objective.

*It will be important to ensure that all data and information be verifiable and that sources are cited.*

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*“The last few new businesses to locate in Albany and to pull business licenses were nail salons. I kid you not. That is not really creative economic development that will benefit the city.”*

### ***Financial and open-space trade-offs***

In an era of increasing public sector costs and decreasing tax revenues, almost everyone is concerned about city finances and the continued financial health of the schools and public services. Residents value park land and open space, and want as much of it as possible – in close proximity to Albany. Albany views itself as a dense, built-out community and sees parks as essential for relaxation, recreation, and aesthetics, and as an environmental resource.

Many in the community see the waterfront property as both a current and potential source of revenue for the city’s needs and argue that the city is not developing other economic sources to replace any revenues that could be lost if changes occur at the waterfront. There is a perception that the city and community are constantly seeking parcel taxes to supplement the city’s coffers and note that there is little effort on the part of the city to aggressively pursue retail or commercial ventures that could boost sales tax and provide worthwhile additions to existing commercial strips.

Others see the Waterfront as the last hope for significant open space within Albany, as an asset for the city and region, and as a critical statement about Albany’s identity – to create something “great” and distinctive on the property – that will first and foremost, enhance the quality of life for Albany residents and its neighbors.

*It will be important to provide the tools to productively discuss different points of view.*

*“Golden Gate Fields is here to stay!”*

*“There’s no way that our small city can ever find the funds to purchase this property. The state budget is a disaster; the bond money is limited and requires a great deal of competitive bidding.”*

*“This property is among the most desirable in the entire Bay area. As a community we have a lot of power to decide what we want at this site, and I believe we can make it happen.”*

### ***Reality of whether or not the land is available to purchase or to convert to public use***

Some residents believe the city has the capacity and the will to find the funds and partners to transform the waterfront property from its current use and ownership into a public benefit area, generally referred to as “open space.” At the same time, the owners of the property have publicly stated that they have no plans to sell the property. Should the property become available, new owners desiring to change the use would need to convince voters that their program for the site is in the best interests of the city and its people. There is also considerable disagreement as to the availability of

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public funds (city, county, state) to purchase, rehabilitate, and maintain the site, should it become available.

*The community engagement process offers the potential for a proactive dialogue and decisionmaking effort that could provide the framework or road map for change that could be supported by the community.*

*“My personal opinion is that Albany residents were robbed of the opportunity to decide for themselves what they wanted for the waterfront. No conversations, no plan materialized; so we couldn't decide.”*

*“If everyone has a chance to talk about things, to vent, to understand that there's a jewel in Albany, I think – and in the course of talking, heal whatever wounds have been opened and reopened – then we will all win.”*

*Capacity and interest of the community-at-large to engage in a process to define a vision for the waterfront, given what are described as bitter experiences and results*

There are probably fewer than 100 people actively involved in the long-running debate over the Albany Waterfront. Most Albany residents lead busy lives delicately balanced between work and family – leaving little time for activities whose impacts are not immediate. Yet Albany residents are highly educated and concerned about the quality of life in this community and the potential that the waterfront affords economically and/or environmentally.

Previous engagement efforts have resulted in anger, disappointment, disillusionment, and stagnation. People argue that “sides” formed and that processes were overcome by “positions” rather than “ideas” or “strategies.” The loudest voices appear to have dominated and intimidated those who felt less empowered and less informed.

*Outreach as well as the engagement process itself will need to understand and respect the dynamics of the community and the history of earlier processes. A fair, transparent, well-documented, and productive process will be essential.*

*“Keeping it local is the most important thing in this process.”*

### ***Regional and local decisionmaking***

While the waterfront is clearly a regional asset, Albany residents – especially because of the feeling that the city is small and less powerful than neighboring municipalities – feel strongly that decisions about the waterfront belong in the hands of residents, since they will ultimately be responsible for, and directly impacted by, land that is within their jurisdiction. They recognize that any decision will

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involve trade-offs that need to be understood and supported. On the other hand, residents in neighboring communities feel they will be impacted by decisions made without their input, and believe that the decisionmaking process should have a way to involve them.

*The engagement process will need to be designed in a way that recognizes regional concerns while ensuring that the Albany voice leads the vision.*

*"It doesn't make sense to go to all the trouble and expense of a citywide process and only include thinking about property that you don't own."*

*"How can you plan for the waterfront if you stop at particular boundaries?"*

*"You can't go in with blinders. If you limit the process or the conversation to just Golden Gate Fields, you're not doing the process justice."*

#### *The definition of the waterfront site*

While the visioning project was initially described as a "replacement plan" for Golden Gate Fields, over the course of these first months of work, it has become obvious that even if the primary discussion and focus is GGF property, it will be critical to consider the relationships between what happens at this site and what happens on adjacent properties. Additionally, the notion of a "replacement plan" infers to many residents an "all or nothing" scenario which defies the intention of an open discussion fostering new and fresh ideas.

*The process should not limit discussion to GGF property.*

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## OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION

*"How do people in Albany get information? Good question. I wish I knew."*

*"If you really want to get your fingers on the pulse of Albany, you've got to go to the Y and exercise or just hang out."*

*"Sometimes I just roll my eyes at the way stuff gets reported. It's just out of whack with what is really happening."*

*"This is a community that gets its information over the backyard fence."*

*"Frankly, I don't know how people get information in this town – there's no real newspaper – the Journal is a weekly and not locally owned or managed. Some people really read the Journal regularly and focus on that for information, but others leave the paper on the porch for days, so I don't think it's all that powerful."*

*"People react, they don't pro-act."*

*"Albany parents are a great group if you can get them all working toward the same goal and get them involved."*

With just 17,000 residents, Albany – like most other small communities located in large metropolitan areas – lacks a daily newspaper, struggles for attention from regional press and media, and finds ways (sometimes successful and other times not) to gain publicity and 'reach' through non-traditional sources. The *Albany - El Cerrito - Kensington Journal* is published weekly (distributed free on Fridays). While some interviewees stress the fact that everyone in Albany reads the *Journal* and many claim letters to the editor are widely disseminated, others say the *Journal* sits on porches and lawns for days, because coverage is spotty, simplistic, and inconsistent. Those who are civically engaged read the *Journal* and also populate the letters to the editor section. Community groups, the city, and issue-based alliances struggle to capture the attention of reporters from more regional or statewide press and media.

Subscription and rack sales of the *SF Chronicle* reflect that more than 40% of Albany households read the *Chronicle*, but a simple scan of the *Chronicle* for the past 12 months shows few articles specifically documenting or addressing Albany issues. For the same period of time, Berkeley shows more than 1,200 references (including references for UC Berkeley). While official numbers regarding delivery of Contra Costa Times, NY Times, and Wall Street Journal are difficult to get at the city level, conversations with interviewees indicated high readership of national press – especially on line.

People in Albany are well informed – regionally, nationally, internationally, and locally – despite the lack of press and media coverage. There are a large number of local and even "block-level" blogs that appear to be read frequently. Most notably *Albany Today* – an informative blog established by Linjun Fan – is popular, timely, informative, and described by many as 'surprisingly unbiased.' Schools have blog sites and e-trees, as do neighborhood groups, issue-based alliances, and

organizations ranging from churches to environmental associations to merchants.

Despite the numerous venues for 'posting' or reading, residents – nearly unanimously – proclaim that they have no idea how people get information and how residents stay abreast of local issues like the waterfront.

The informal (unedited, unsubstantiated) processing and dissemination of information – from the blogs to the backyard fence – works to some degree, but it is clear that these methods are fraught with problems:

- people receive information that confirms what they already believe;
- people get slivers of information;
- information is passed off as accurate with minimum effort to check the facts or understand the context.

It is little wonder that residents are skeptical of information they receive, especially about controversial topics and issues. This information is often described as *not real information, more like campaigning.* The dearth of trusted, fact-based information has impacted perceptions of both options for – and realities of – the future of the waterfront, and has led to wide and deep distrust within the community. 'Positions' about which supposed "facts" are true and which are "lies" fill the void.

### *Getting the word out:: possibilities and challenges*

- There are a number of official communication vehicles used by the city to bring information to the community, but it is not clear how well they reach their intended audiences. The city communicates with residents through:
  - city website, recently updated;
  - televised council and commission meetings, Channel 33 KALB;
  - Albany Activity Guide
  - City Newsletter
- Local organizations often rely on flyers posted on Solano Avenue and other high-use locations; sometimes groups send mailings (postcards, flyers, letters).
- Residents who participate in civic organizations receive information from these channels – either through presentations, written materials, or 'updates.'
- Some residents feel that the only way to get information to the community is to deliver it to everyone's door, and hope that it's not during an election period because then your flyer will get buried in what is described as "a big pile of handouts."
- Informal communication is perhaps the most effective way to get information to the largest number of residents – from yahoo groups to listservs to blog sites to actual in-person conversations with neighbors and friends. However, these methods are generally sporadic, support either issues without deadlines or ones that are urgent, and generally do not provide in

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depth information and/or contrasting points of view so critical to complex issues.

- While schools have their own outreach information dissemination systems – generally aimed at parents – they are often guarded about allowing their lists and systems to be used to disseminate any information not directly related to the school issues. Schools are especially wary of getting involved with the spread of information that they believe is not “neutral.”
- Albany residents are busy, juggling a host of activities and priorities. Getting them to pay attention requires strong messages (especially indicating why and how an issue affects them, their property, their family, etc.) and valuable, interesting, concise, useful, well-documented information.

With specific regard to the waterfront visioning process, residents will need to have confidence that:

- the process will be neutral;
- there is no previously-set “agenda;”
- everyone will be heard and respected;
- bullying will not be tolerated;
- solid, verifiable information will be provided prior to the process and throughout implementation;
- the outcome is important to each resident;
- residents will be able to see how their input impacts the process;
- residents can make a difference;
- it will not take an excessive amount of time.



FERN TIGER ASSOCIATES

# OUTREACH

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## OUTREACH GOALS AND STRATEGIES

*“People say there is a lack of communication, but I think that it’s actually not a lack of communication, but a lack of listening and understanding.”*

*“What’s in it for me? This is what people want to know. Will it lower my property taxes? Will it improve the schools?”*

*“People are busy – especially parents – especially Albany parents. But they care about supporting their children. So if parents can understand how the process does just that – lays the groundwork for creating future opportunities for their children – you have a better chance of getting them involved.”*

*“What brings people out is a specific proposal that they hate or something that really scares them... sad but true.”*

*“The best way to get people information is to bring it to their homes, by mail or on their doorstep.”*

*“I don’t know what I’d recommend. I think people have ‘heard’ it all.”*

### Goals

- Build Trust
- Build Excitement and Interest
- Build Information (and community knowledge)
- Build Audiences (and participation)
- Build Awareness
- Build a Model

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

### *Build Trust*

- Given the overall lack of trust and suspicion among many in leadership positions, and the growing desire for fairness, civility, and information-driven decisions, it will be important to emphasize the neutrality of the information presented, the fairness and documentation of the process itself, (the lack of any ‘agenda,’ other than a successful, well-attended, information-laden process that yields results that can be embraced by the community-at-large), and the design of sessions that can ensure facilitated, safe, respectful, and open discussion, where participants can voice opinions and understand issues, tradeoffs, and possibilities.
- Carefully document the process and outcomes to ensure broad understanding of the process and the thinking that informed and created the ‘community vision.’
- Moving the process forward will require an investment of energy and resources toward the goal of establishing and maintaining confidence in the city’s process. It will be critical to create a process that residents view and experience as open, honest, factual, and responsive to local concerns; and where residents understand how results will be used.
- Provide confidence that the process will be ‘safe’ and respectful of all opinions. During outreach for participation, emphasize the ways in which this process is designed specifically to encourage all points of view, including those who have never before voiced an opinion. And while ‘being heard’ doesn’t necessarily mean that each opinion will ultimately be the ‘community vision,’ the final report will document the full range of views.

### *Build Excitement and Interest*

- A new graphic identity (look and branding) with purposeful and far-reaching placement will identify the project – emphasize its innovation, participatory nature, its inviting and open structure, and its goal for “results.”
- Create consistent signage for all locations at which meetings are held. Include thank you signs to acknowledge community support and involvement. Signs posted at meeting sites and in key locations in the city could offer visual cues that the process is underway, increasing participation.

### *Build Information and Community Knowledge*

- The outreach and public education to every household is intended to “level the playing field” and to maximize engagement of residents in this issue which is critical to Albany, but which may not have the same resonance and draw that immediate issues such as maintaining school safety could have.

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- It will be important to develop and distribute widely – comprehensive, compelling, factual, and understandable information to all residents, even those who choose not to participate directly in the process.
- Answer the hard questions. The community is demanding valid, well-documented information and data about the waterfront and its relationship to the city. (See earlier discussion regarding categories of information requested) The process will need to provide ample, early information to enable equity of participation and build the collective knowledge base. By providing clear, concise information that people can review prior to participating in the engagement process (and by adding to that initial information once the sessions begin) residents will have a greater understanding of the facts and the consequences of the issue.
- Materials should be designed to convey the information clearly, and to engage residents – through interesting formats and strong, compelling graphics and text. Information should be made available to residents in multiple formats and through multiple venues including print and electronic means.
- Develop a glossary of important terms and acronyms (open space, park, Measure C, CEQA, EIR, “taking,” land trust, ESSP, EBRPD, ABAG, CDPR, BAAQMD, FFC, AWC, CESP, bulb, neck, plateau, parcel, assessment, basic aid district, etc.)

### *Build Audiences*

- By engaging a broad range of participants reflecting the demographics of Albany (and documenting participation demographics); by encouraging residents who do not ordinarily participate or who have been silent on the waterfront issue, engagement should yield results that reflect the interests, will, and spirit of an informed community. Include seniors, renters, youth, and utilize ethnic media as appropriate.
- Educate “community ambassadors” and create partnerships with community organizations and leaders (including commissions, those who work in local institutions and civic clubs) so that they can champion and promote participation in the process. Keep as many people as possible apprised of the process and as disseminators of materials.
- Expand the knowledge base of the full Albany community.
- Expand the audience base. Consider the development of a series of public forums, sessions with local media, and other outreach activities to build understanding of the process and the issues.
- Acknowledge people’s busy schedules by holding sessions at convenient times: emphasize the ‘efficiency’ of the process; promote sessions on weekends, evening, and other times when residents can attend. In all descriptions of the process emphasize that the time commitment is limited; even if residents decide to participate in only a fraction of the process (e.g., a single meeting), their input will be valuable.

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- Reach out to parents of children in the schools and of children who are not yet in school. Find ways to reach families who are often too busy to attend meetings. For those parents whose children are in school, teachers or PTAs will be effective gatekeepers.

### ***Build Awareness***

- Illustrate how the waterfront impacts each Albany resident. Avoid ‘scare tactics’ and focus on the potential for this part of the city to offer more to its residents – from families with small children to seniors.
- Understand Albany High School students as ‘messengers.’ Students and teachers are integral parts of every community. Engage high school reporters to cover events related to the process. *The Cougar*, has the potential to deliver information about the waterfront and the community engagement process, as seen through the eyes of students.
- Understand the importance of word-of-mouth as a means of reaching residents. Consistency of message – not just in the written word but in verbal descriptions – will be critical. Every resident is a potential ‘ambassador’ of the process. Thus providing accurate, appropriate, and ongoing information is critical. City staff who are in contact with residents in any capacity should be briefed regularly on the process so that they can answer questions appropriately.
- Design website to link with city site. Keep website up to date with accurate and appropriate information and visuals.
- Develop strong, memorable messages about the process. Respond quickly to criticism and to clarify misperceptions and misinformation (repeatedly, if necessary.) Coordinate with e-trees and blogs to support the spread of important information and to correct misinformation. Draft all messages to be easily understandable, memorable, and short.
- Work with the city to ensure timeliness of updates on the city website.
- Design launch<sup>7</sup> that promotes participation and awareness of upcoming engagement process and that provides information about waterfront issues.

### ***Build a Model***

- Document the process and disseminate widely.

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A special launch will be designed to “kick off” and broadly publicize the process and how to become engaged.

FERN TIGER ASSOCIATES  
ENGAGEMENT

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## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

*“The process needs to be framed so that “sides” don’t have a reason to be “sides.” People need to see that it’s open, that there are no value judgements.”*

*“The waterfront has been a divisive issue for years. People have been vilified. My position: We have Measure C. If you educate people, they will do the right thing.”*

*“Frankly, I didn’t support using funds for this process. But now I think it’s the only hope. I just hope it works. It can have incredible ramifications – not just for the waterfront but for the residents of this community to value one another. I’ll give it a try.”*

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## ENGAGING THE ALBANY COMMUNITY IN THE FUTURE OF ITS WATERFRONT

In order to ensure that the future of the Albany waterfront is based on a set of widely-shared and mutually-agreed-upon core principles, it is critical to bring the community together in a spirit of collaboration for a greater good.

Ideally, hundreds of (and hopefully more) Albany residents from every walk of life will consider and articulate, in facilitated, small group settings, their perspectives on a variety of issues – providing substantive insight into a collective vision for the future of the waterfront. While the “meat” of the meeting sessions is not the subject of this report, how the community will be engaged and approached is a core part of this status report.

The range of “gathering” options includes, but is not limited to:

- a series of numerous sequential convenings (at public places, churches, homes, schools, work sites, parks, etc.) where hosts (about 75) are responsible for identifying and inviting between 10 and 15 participants for each of the sessions.
- a series of closely-timed or simultaneous convenings at large venues (schools, churches, library, community centers, etc.) where small groups meet simultaneously in facilitated sessions (e.g. five groups of 20 each meet in facilitated sessions at the same time in a public location).
- a “train-the-trainer” model where directors of organizations learn to facilitate the process with their own constituents.
- a two-tiered sets of focus groups – one comprised of leaders from community-based organizations; one of randomly selected residents (e.g. invitations to every fifth house on block).

These are just a few of the possibilities designed to get everyday residents to think about, discuss, prioritize, and ultimately try to come to consensus around values and core principles to inform options for the waterfront. The sessions themselves will engage participants to make tough choices among goals that might sometimes appear in conflict, and to understand trade-offs that move from the personal to the public’s benefit.

*Note: Woven throughout any of the process options would be a public education effort that provides clear, concise, understandable, and neutral information to inform the public discussion. This public education effort will begin several weeks before the participatory process begins and will continue throughout the process.*

A carefully constructed public outreach campaign will launch the community participation process and later will announce and present findings and subsequent steps explaining how participation will lead to realistic options for the waterfront. Documentation of participation as well as results will portray how all voices were represented. By engaging residents in a transparent and recorded, the waterfront’s future will rest on a foundation of shared values



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## POSSIBLE MODELS FOR ENGAGEMENT\*

- Model 1: “60 Dialogues; 60 Days”  
Self Organizing (small groups – 10-15 per session, invited and selected by resident ‘host’)
- Model 2: “4 x 4 x 4 x 4”  
Participation “assignment” by particular methods, e.g.:
  - Random Participation (10-12 workshops, anyone can come, held at each school site, community center, etc. – once at workshop, assigned to small group; four small group sessions facilitated simultaneously; four sites at a time; four times each weekend for four weekends)
  - Designated Large Geographic Areas - city would be divided into three “zones”; all residents of the city would be invited to participate at particular sites within their “zone”; sessions would occur at multiple time and days – residents attend the session in their zone. Everyone residing in each zone would be invited to the sessions that occur in their part of the city. [Meetings repeat four times in that zone – meeting content and process is the same at each meeting time.]
  - Sessions held at school sites. (Residents go to session at school at which their children attend(ed) or the school closest to their home)
- Model 3: “Day for the Waterfront”  
*One Discussion / Many Places* - Single day, multiple locations; same activity going on at all locations
- Model 4: “Block By Block”  
Designated neighborhood blocks meet at designated sites (grouped by (approximately) three-block geographic area; on certain day/time, your three-block area invited to meeting; each resident attends one)

\* This list represents the options for engagement that are described in detail on subsequent pages. Fern Tiger Associates is focused primarily (at this point) on Model 4. Other options and designs for participation were reviewed and eliminated.

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***Critical Assumptions for all options:***

Regardless of which model of engagement is finally selected, the following holds true:

- Special effort will be made to reach out and engage the participation of all residents of Albany: renters, residents at Bayside, Bridgewater, and Gateview, those who live in University Village, youth, seniors, and those who do not typically participate in civic discussions, including those more comfortable in languages other than English, etc.
- The process will be in two parts. Participants can only attend one session of each part. All sessions will be identical. Participants will be Albany residents.\*
- All households will be approached in the same manner through some door-to-door process with materials and/or a mailing announcing and explaining the process with information about time, place, and process to get involved. RSVPs will be explained and followed up with confirmation regarding, date, time, place.
- Sessions will be documented to collect information that is discussed at every session (Sessions will be designed to accumulate quantitative and qualitative information.)
- A simple questionnaire will be used to evaluate participant reaction to the process and to gather demographic data.
- All sessions to be professionally facilitated.
- Goal (for all options) to reach more than 600 non-duplicated adults - approximately 6% of total adult population (youth groups additional).
- “Blitz” (process to occur over relatively short period of time) creates excitement and short time frame keeps the issue and the process in the eyes of residents.
- All models require RSVP to plan appropriately regarding number of facilitators, languages, etc. and to keep small groups with 10 - 15 person range
- All workshops will have appropriate translators for non-English speaking participants, as needed and identified in RSVP.
- Local businesses could be asked to provide incentives for participation (e.g. gift certificates, for which there could be a “drawing” – donors will be recognized).

\* Consideration is being given to the possibility of holding a special session for waterfront-engaged, non-Albany residents, but this will be separate and apart from the resident process, although it will occur within the same time frame. Information from residents and non-residents will be easily dis-aggregated.

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### *The Sessions<sup>8</sup>*

Regardless of the gathering format/model, the actual sessions would all look very similar. They will:

- be informal
- solicit opinions
- respect and respond to questions and new ideas
- include an iterative process of building information, ideas, options, understanding tradeoffs, beginning to analyze suggestions
- be designed to enable participants to leave feeling they learned something new while simultaneously capable of engaging in dialogue to impact the future of the Albany waterfront
- be approximately two hours
- require RSVPs to ensure appropriate number of participants and facilitators
- require set up time and dismantling time
- include graphic tools and “take-aways”
- be documented, with information – qualitative and quantitative – recorded for later cumulative analysis and presentation
- likely include:
  - Brief introduction to the process and intended outcomes (how the information will be used). Introduction of participants (name, how long in Albany, frequency of visits to Albany waterfront and other local waterfronts, etc.)
  - Presentation (in graphic format) of key information (environmental, land use, financial, etc.)
  - Exercises (very tentative description):
    - that solicit opinions about waterfront usage in light of priorities and values based on information provided and scenarios
    - that hone in on key areas of concern (e.g. finances, uses, accessibility, environmental)
    - to understand and respond to tradeoffs
    - to conceive vision(s) and guidelines
    - to create concise “message” or other summary of decisions made by group (including, if necessary – majority and minority “statement”
    - short survey to collect demographic data about participants and other relevant info

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Note: the design of the session – process and content – would be similar in all models; the difference would be in the number of small groups (10-15 people) at a given venue at a given time. In other words, in some models, there would be more than one small groups meeting simultaneously; in others, a single small group would be convened at the specified location.

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### **Model 1: Self Organizing**

#### **“60 Days; 60 Dialogues”**

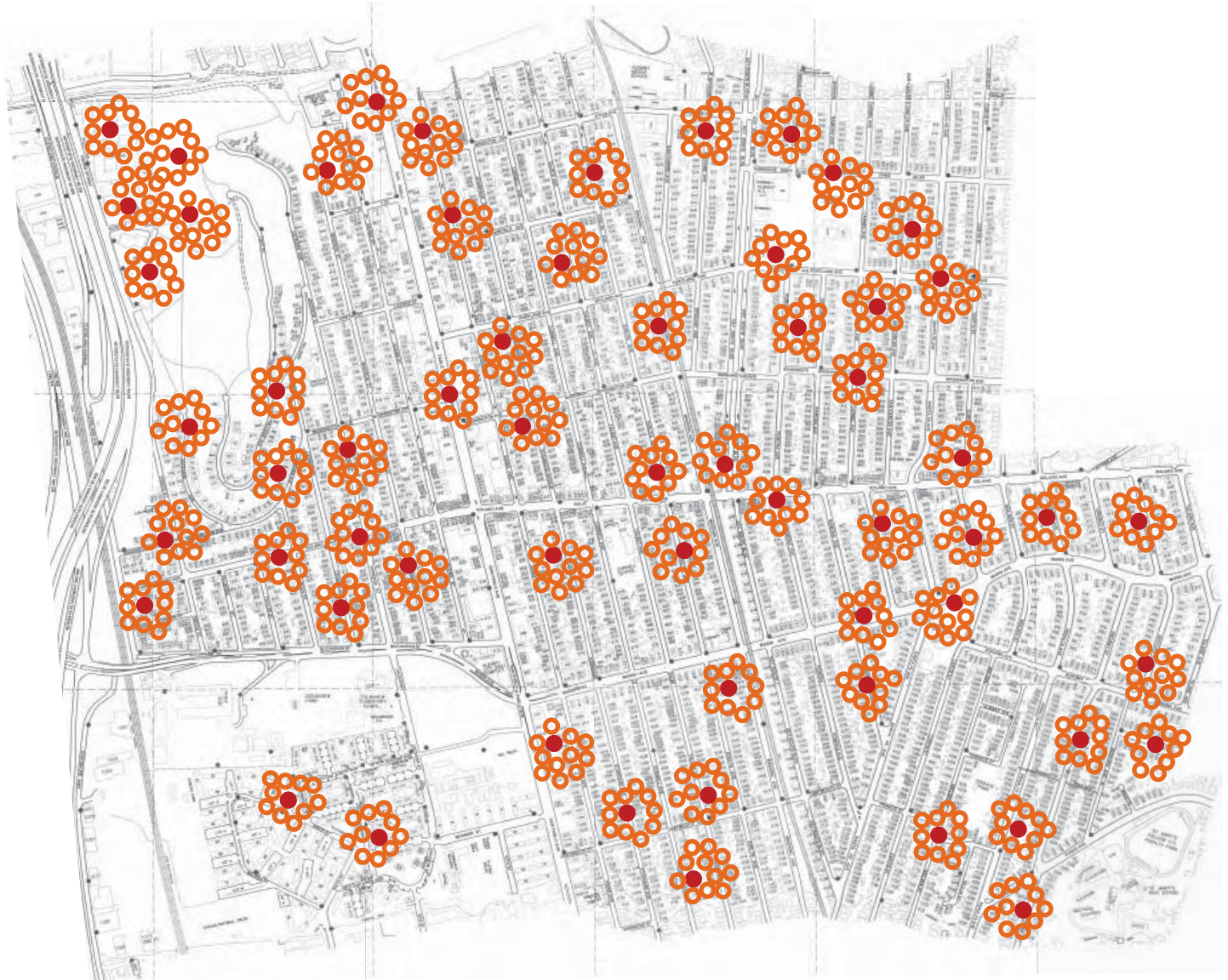
- small groups – 10-15 per session
- participants invited and selected for small groups by resident ‘host’
- series of 50-70 small group sessions
- conducted over 10-12-week period throughout the city
- host invites not less than 10 and no more than 15 participants to a session held at a home, community center, school, church, business, etc.
- participants responded to an individual (the host)
- host determines location, date, and time within designated 12-week period; identifies and invites guests/ participants
- if participants ‘invited’ to more than one venue, they must select just one

### **Advantages**

- Anyone resident can be a host; any resident can participate: grassroots participation and openness
- Inspires, from the very beginning, a buy-in from broad cross section who play a role in ensuring the process is inclusive
- Puts participants at ease because they are among friends
- Self-perpetuating – an attender can become a host (although not participate the second time)
- Participants have responded to an individual (who they probably know) so they are more likely to attend
- Hosts become promoters of the process

### **Challenges**

- Labor intensive (50-70 sessions; set ups; dismantling; follow ups; etc.)
- Requires the recruitment of a large number of hosts beyond the “usual suspects” who are already engaged in waterfront issue
- Participant demographics need to be monitored throughout process to ensure that the sessions are being conducted throughout the city and that participants reflect the diversity of the community. (If this is not the case, the consultant needs to do special outreach and promotion of the process in other sectors to build participation.)



## Model 1: 60 Days; 60 Dialogues

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- Approximately 60 gatherings; each with 10-15 residents (during 10-12 week period)
- 'Hosts' invite participants (Albany residents: friends, neighbors, etc.) to attend one gathering only (if people receive multiple invitations, they must select one)
- Gathering locations determined by each host

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## Model 2: Random Sampling

“4 x 4 x 4 x 4”

- Participation “assignment” by particular methods, e.g.:
  - Random Participation (10-12 workshops, anyone can come, held at each school site, community center, etc. – once at workshop, assigned to small group; four small group sessions facilitated simultaneously; four sites at a time; four times each weekend for four weekends)
  - Designated Large Geographic Areas - city is divided into three sections; all residents of the city invited to participate at particular sites; sessions will occur at multiple time and days, but residents attend the session in their location. Everyone residing in each large geographic area invited to the sessions that occur in their part of the city. These meetings repeat four times – exactly the same meeting each time.
- attempts to reach large numbers of people in fewer sessions while retaining small group quality dialogue
- series of ten to twelve “workshops” take place in different locations across the city, at variety of convenient times, over the course of an eight-week period
- locations for sessions could include library, community center, churches, schools, and could also take place in conjunction with already-scheduled meetings of organizations comprised of Albany residents
- small groups of 10-15 within large groups setting<sup>9</sup>
- consultant manages and coordinates all outreach and RSVP lists

### Advantages

- Format familiar
- Comfort in meeting in public spaces
- Multiple dates, times, locations to select in order to participate
- Excitement garnered by being with many people
- Generates publicity – large numbers
- Difficult to ensure one time only and resident-only participation

### Challenges

- Random placement within small groups at sessions could impact comfort of dialogue
- Likely to engage more vocal people and limit those less involved
- Overcoming history of large group setting where residents have felt intimidated

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9

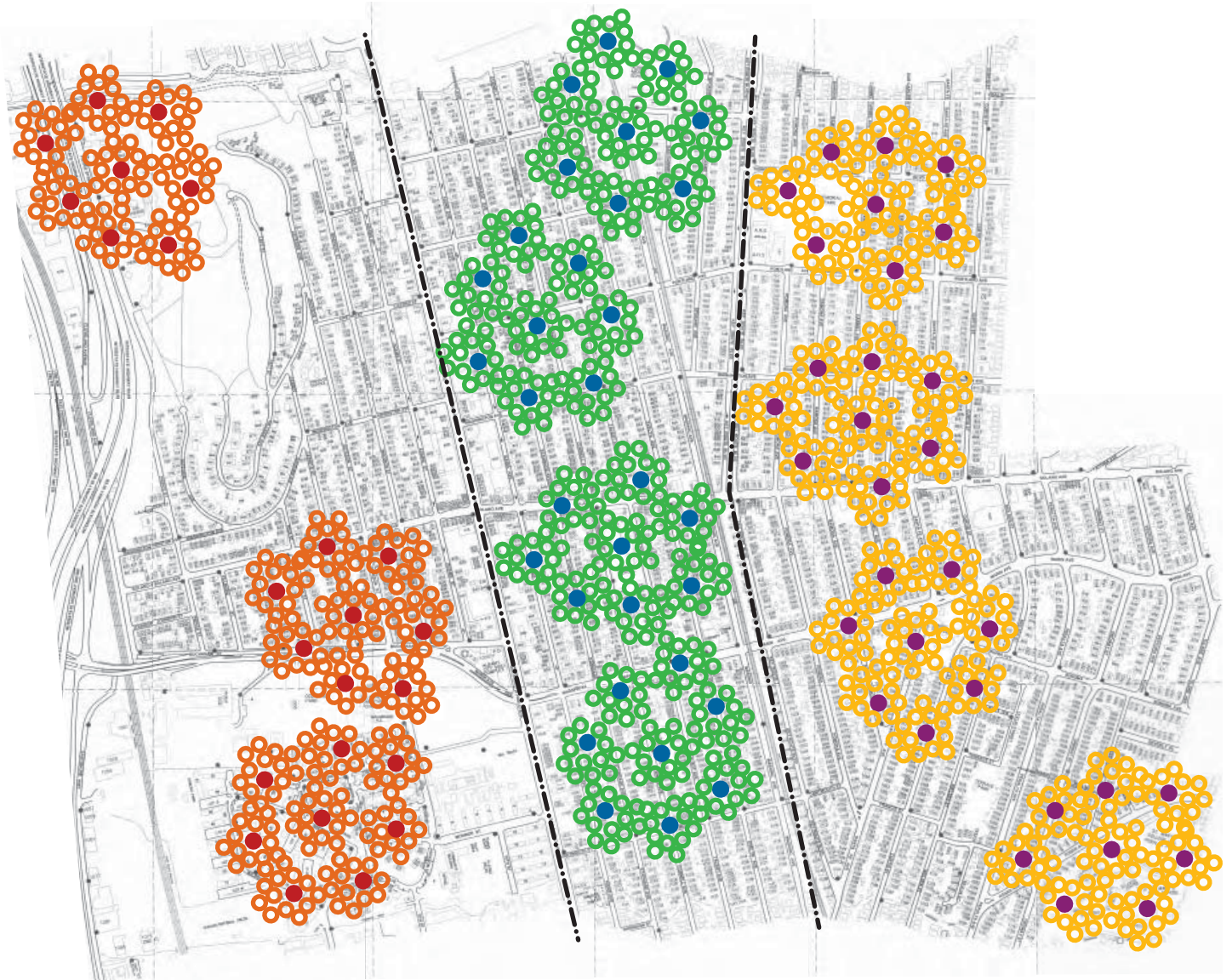
Possible to take advantage of the large number of participants would be to divide into small break out sessions, but to have two people move from one break out to another halfway through – enabling some “mixing” of information.



## Model 2: "4 x 4 x 4 x 4"      Large Venues; Small Groups – Random

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- 10-12 large venues (over 10-12 week period)
- Multiple small groups meet simultaneously at each large venue
- Held at public spaces throughout city
- Residents go to any single session (one time only)

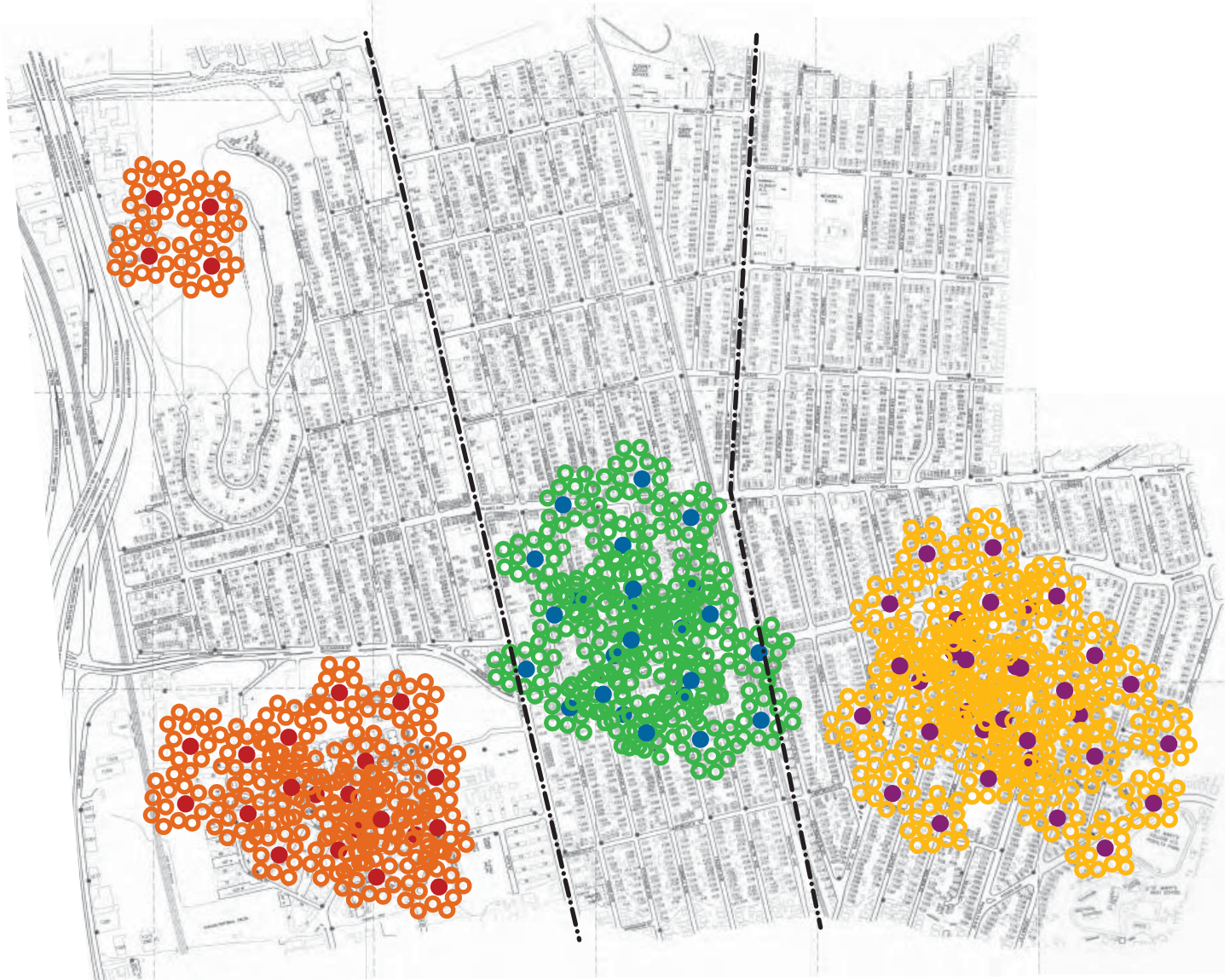


## Model 2: Large Venues; Small Groups – Zones

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- 10-12 sessions held in diverse large venues (over 10-12 week period)
- Multiple small groups meet simultaneously at each large venue
- Held at public places throughout city
- Residents go to any single session (one time only)





## Model 2: Large Venues; Small Groups – Schools

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- 10-12 sessions in schools within zone (over 10-12 week period)
- Multiple small groups meet simultaneously at each large venue
- Held at public spaces throughout city
- Residents go to any single session (one time only)
- Sessions facilitated three different times/days at each elementary school + University Village + Pierce Street Condos

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**Model Three: City-Wide Blitz: “Day for the Waterfront” –**

*One Discussion / Many Places -*

- single day, multiple locations
- same activity going on at all locations
- one day devoted city-wide to facilitated sessions about the waterfront in Albany at multiple locations
- simultaneous at different venues
- all participants experience the same exercises
- once attenders show up at any of the venues, they would be assigned to smaller groups – creating the sense that all over the city – on that day – small groups are “working” to think about the future of the waterfront

**Advantages**

- novel idea (first in Albany?)
- media attention
- easy to control and manage one-time only participation (unless two sessions on same day)
- moves process forward quickly

**Challenges**

- requires many facilitators and multiple sets of facilitator tools
- limits options for participation to one day only
- important to select date with minimum conflicts
- strong coordination required
- risky, if participation is not high
- time intensive (re: logistics and prep)



**Model 3: Citywide “Day for the Waterfront”**

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- Multiple large venues on a single day
- Small groups meet simultaneously at each large venue
- Held at public spaces throughout city
- Residents go any single session

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#### **Model Four: Block By Block**

- residents organized by address – approximately three-block geographic areas
- meetings held at designated sites, close to mini-neighborhood at public venues (poss. schools)
- sessions convened on certain day/time for each mini-neighborhood
- focus on engaging residents among neighbors (and others living within a few-block range)
- individual letters mailed or hand delivered inviting residents to attend *their* block's session

#### **Advantages**

- creates sense of total city involvement and having every resident participate
- individual invitations may generate higher attendance
- feeling of neighborhood connection may encourage participation
- easy to guide 'one time/resident attendance only'
- builds community - could have long term impact
- neighborhood connection in public venue
- comfortable setting for participants who do not know neighbors
- clearly public meeting at public venue, but at small scale

#### **Challenges**

- logistics of outreach and meeting invitations (requires different logistic information in each letter)
- fewer date/time options



## Model 4: Block By Block

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- Approximately 60 gatherings of 10-15 residents at each gathering (during 10-12 week period)
- Residents of designated blocks invited to attend specific single small gathering at designated site
- Gathering locations: public spaces

★ Possible meeting location (public)

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### PROPOSED ENGAGEMENT MODEL

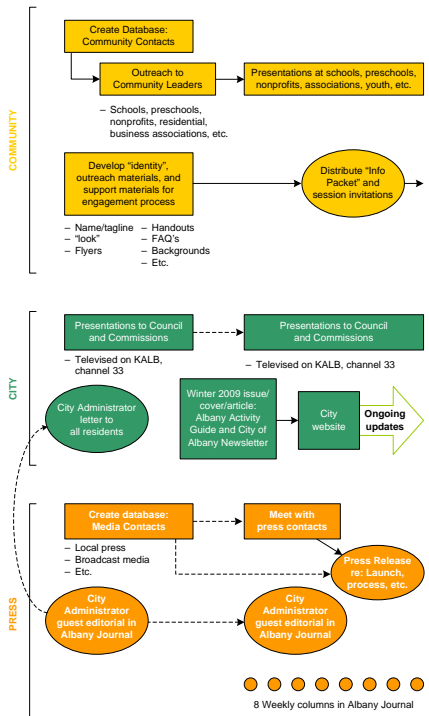
It is recommended that community engagement process for the Albany Waterfront visioning employ a series of *two stand-alone, sequential opportunities for participation*.

The first opportunity is planned to take place between March and May. At this point, FTA believes the *Block-By-Block model (#4)* would be best suited to meet the goals of the engagement process. *See pages 48-49.*

Upon completion of this series of facilitated sessions, the information gathered would be synthesized and analyzed (taking advantage of the summer months during which it is typically difficult to encourage participation, especially in communities with large youth populations). This information would then be used as a basis for planning the second set of sessions (Part Two) to take place in early September (post 'back-to-school').

Voices to Vision: Albany at the Waterfront ----- DRAFT 9/22/08 Outreach and Engagement

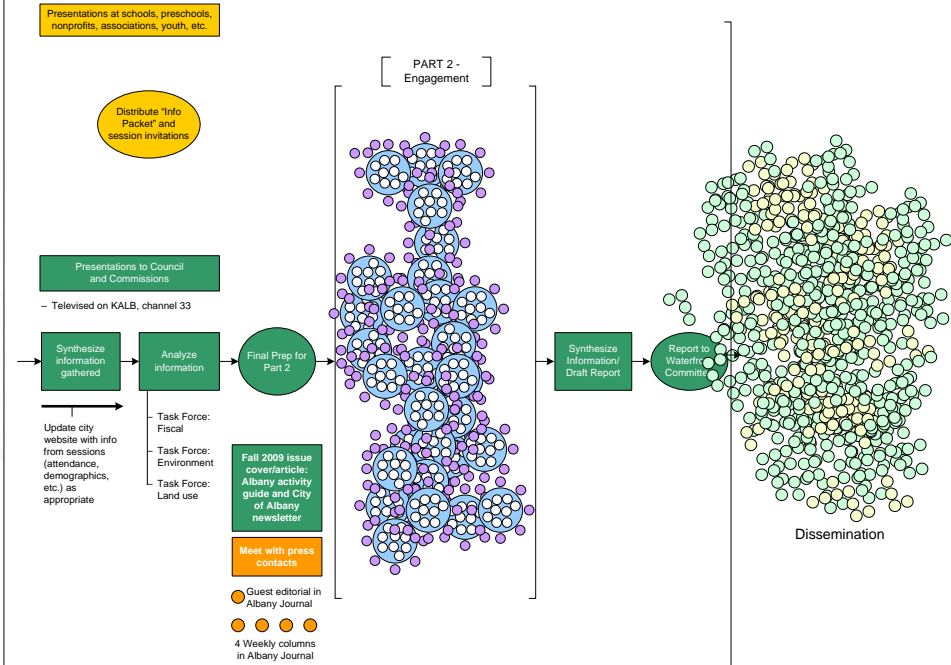
Outreach to publicize process, provide information, encourage attendance/participation



Launch: Door-to-door walk to encourage participation



Outreach to publicize process, provide information, encourage attendance/participation



DOCUMENTATION



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*“One generation plants the trees; another gets the shade.”*

- Chinese Proverb



FERN TIGER ASSOCIATES

# APPENDIX

## **Appendix**

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**Data on Interviewees**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Document Review**

**Possible Names**

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## INTERVIEWS / MEETINGS

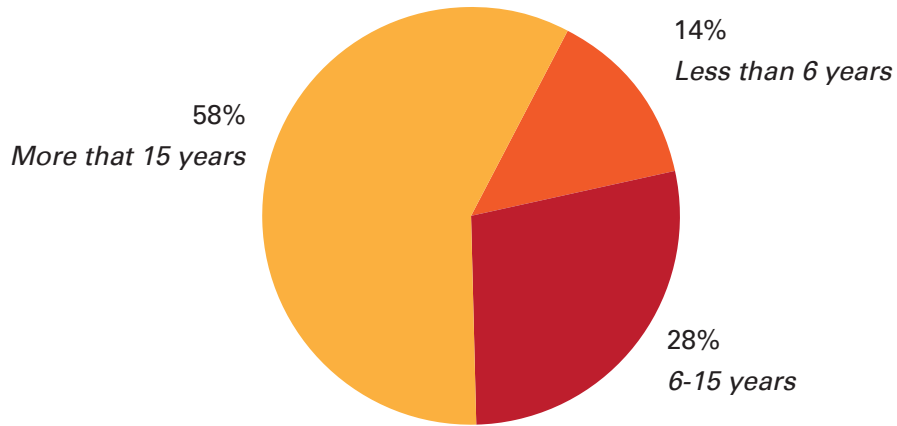
Anonymous	Judith Innes	Beth Pollard
Anonymous	Farid Javandel	David Pontecorvo
Anonymous	Preston Jordan	Jill Posener
Anonymous	Norman LaForce	Alan Riffer
Charlie Adams	Clay Larson	Thelma Rubin
David Arkin	Robert Lieber	Jean Safir
Marge Atkinson	Peter Maas	Merry Selk
Charlie Blanchard	Alan Maris	Marsha Skinner
Jeff Bond	Howard McNenny	Diana Sloat
Ann Chaney	Peggy McQuaid	Eddy So
Robert Cheasty	John Miki	Solano Avenue Association
Bill Dann	Susan Moffat	Mackenzie Sowers
Kathy Diehl	Don Monahan	Marla Stephenson
John Dyckman	Edward Moore	Sol Strand
Ed Fields	Don Neuwirth	Peggy Thomsen
Ruth Ganong	Jewel Okawachi	Ellen Toomey
Terry Georgeson	Caryl O'Keefe	Stephanie Travis
Golden Gate Fields	Robert Outis	Maile Urbancic
Robert Good	Sally Outis	Miriam Walden
Steve Granholm	Leo Panian	Joanne Wile
Trevor Grayling	Francesco Papalia	Robert Zweben
Gabriella Hammack	Brian Parker	and random conversations
Ellen Hershey	Nick Pilch	
Jerri Holan	Steve Pinto	

# Interviewees (Albany residents only)

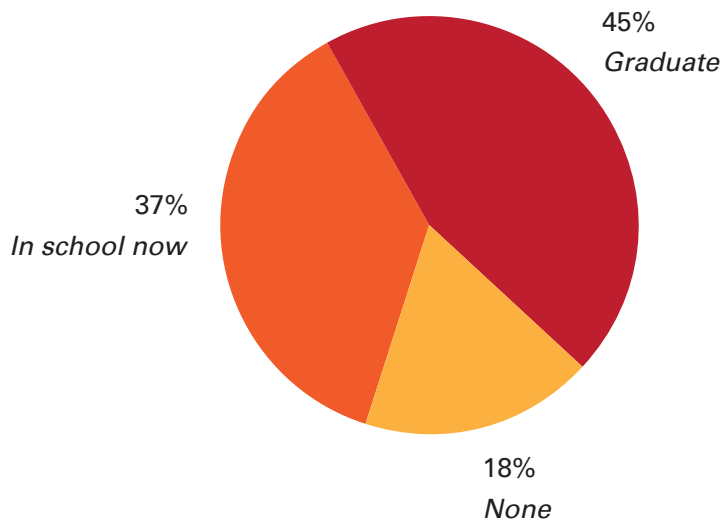
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### Interviewees: Length of Residency in Albany\*

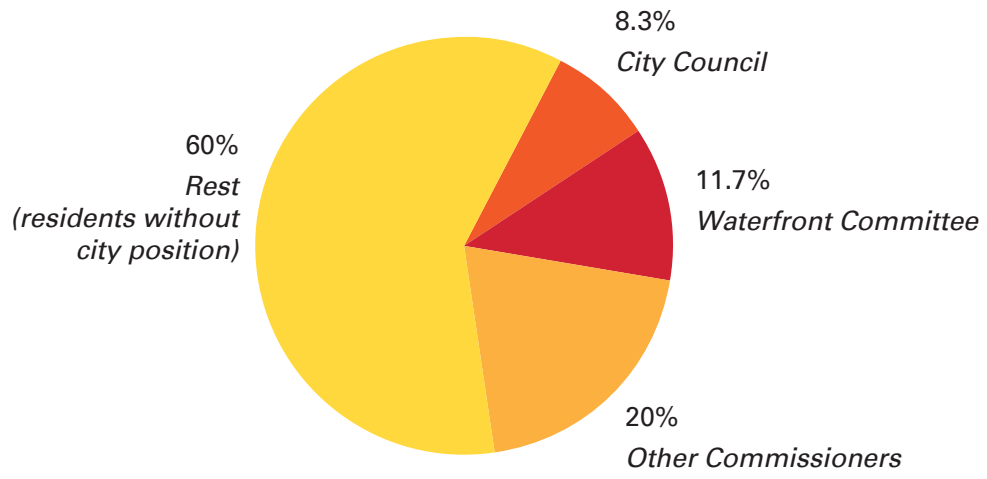


### Interviewees: Children in Albany Schools\*



\* Does not include interviewees not residing in Albany

# Interviewees



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## Frequently Asked Questions

### Visioning:

- What is different about this visioning process?

### Ownership/ History/ Maintenance:

- Who owns the various parcels that comprise the waterfront?
- What lands make up the Albany waterfront?
- How many acres is the waterfront?
- What is the current status of the East Shore State Park and the Bay Trail?
- What is the current status of the Bulb?
- Who maintains the various parts of the waterfront?
- What is the history of the Albany waterfront, including the ownership history?
- What is the value of the privately held parcels at the waterfront?
- What needs to be done before the Bulb can be incorporated in the East Shore State Park?
- Who will pay for the necessary mitigations on the Bulb?
- Will off leash dogs and public art be allowed on the Bulb when it is incorporated into the ESSP?
- What is the status of the Ferry?
- Who owns Golden Gate Fields?
- Who owns Magna Entertainment Corporation (MEC)?
- Who uses the current Albany Waterfront and the Berkeley Waterfront?
- Who attends the races at Golden Gate Fields?

### Site and Surroundings:

- How accessible is the current waterfront to wheelchairs and people who have difficulty walking?
- What are the weather patterns on the Albany Waterfront?
- Where does the jet fuel line run and how does that impact potential development?
- Do different parts of the waterfront have different potential for development?
- Are there particular aesthetic and/or cultural conditions that should be considered?

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#### Legal/Land Use:

- Can any of the privately owned land on the waterfront be transformed into public open space?
- What does “development” mean? Does it always involve building private structures?
- What is the current zoning of the waterfront? What are legally permissible uses of the property?
- What rights does MEC have to develop the GGF property?
- What state and regional agencies have regulatory control over development of the waterfront?
- How can Albany residents effect what happens on the waterfront?
- What is measure C?
- What is CEQA?
- What is an EIR?
- Has an EIR been completed for the property? Who pays for an EIR?
- Is that EIR still valid/relevant?

#### Environment:

- What are the environmental constraints that impact development at the waterfront?
- Are there toxic areas of the waterfront that will require cleanup before they can be developed or turned into a park or commercial space?

#### Economics and Fiscal Issues:

- What does GGF contribute to the city in tax dollars? What percent of the city budget does this amount come to?
- How does the city project future revenues?
- Are the GGF contributions to the city increasing or decreasing?
- How would different types of development at GGF affect Solano Ave and San Pablo Ave businesses?
- Have any economic studies been completed in recent years?
- How could Albany benefit from different types of development at the waterfront?
- What is the current financial status of the City of Albany?
- What are the infrastructure needs of the city?
- What if the financial situation of the Albany Schools? What percent of the school district’s budget is derived from taxes paid by GGF?



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- How would different development options at the waterfront impact the financial status of the schools?
- What are the other areas of the city that could be commercially developed to increase the city's tax base?
- Is GGF property for sale?

Magna:

- What is Magna Entertainment Corporation's financial situation? How does this impact GGF? How does it impact the city of Albany?
- What is the financial situation of horse racing in the United States?
- Will MEC continue to operate GGF as a horse racing track?
- If MEC decides to stop operating GGF, what are their options?
- What other tracks does MEC own?
- What has MEC done at its other U.S. tracks to increase revenue?
- Has MEC pursued development on its property at the waterfront, beyond operating GGF?

Miscellaneous:

- What have other cities done to develop their waterfronts to benefit the community?
- How can the city of Albany be proactive regarding waterfront development?

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## DOCUMENT REVIEW<sup>10</sup>

### Environmental Studies

#### **Fill Placement Study: Albany Isles Waterfront Development (1969)**

Harding, Miller Lawson and Assoc.

Performed to develop a plan and recommend placement methods for debris fill operations, and to define the supplemental engineering activities required to complete the project; defines fill placement methods and calculates fill volume to build Islands A + B to 17 ft. and Island C to 12 ft.

#### **Phase I Soil Investigation (1969)**

Harding, Miller, Lawson & Assoc.

Contains recommendations and specifications for fill placement, information covering dike slopes, and rip-rap requirements, estimates of areal settlement expected beneath debris and earth fill, and recommendations for design lengths and capacities of foundation piling. Area investigated planned as part of a commercial development on Island B, the inboard island of two large islands planned for development. Portions of the site already covered with 25 ft. or more of debris fill; remainder of site exposed bay mud tideland. (map shows that "Island B" included all of the Bulb and was planned to be about 3x the size of the Bulb; five bores drilled on southern end of the bulb going down 105 ft.)

#### **Albany Isles Waterfront Plan: Hydraulic Model. Tidal/Current Test (1970)**

Army Corps of Engineers, Hydraulic Model

Maps present potential current shifts created by proposed new islands

#### **Albany Waterfront: Environmental Impact Report. Parts 1 and 2 (1974-6)**

Environ

EIR for 1976 Waterfront Master Plan – development of the Bulb with marina and shops; geologic, sedimentation, water quality, ecological, archaeological, aesthetic, noise, circulation, public service and socioeconomic impacts of proposed in-fill and development; outlines alternatives, including removal of existing landfill.

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Reflects approximately 5,000+ pages of documents provided by the city, residents, and other research

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**Environmental and Socio-Economic Technical Background Reports for the Albany Waterfront (Nov., 1984)**

Hall, Goodhue, Haisley and Barker.

Compiled for Santa Fe Land Improvement Company; covers the entire GGF land and the Plateau; includes geotechnical study, landfill assessment, and archaeological assessment; subsurface data - one bore was done to supplement existing data; bore site converted into test well to monitor leachate. Study offers background information to determine what type of development might be structurally feasible on each of five sections of GGF property – does not address specific development proposals.

**Geotechnical and Coastal Engineering Study: Final Design Phase, Albany Landfill Closure. (January, 1987)**

Geomatrix for Bissel & Karn

Lays out recommendations for capping and sealing the Bulb in preparation for the closure of the landfill; includes depth soundings in the water around the Bulb and analysis of materials required to seal the landfill.

**Draft Program EIR - Albany Waterfront Lands. (November, 1987)**

Nichols Berman

Applicant: Santa Fe Realty Corporation

Incorporated into and superseded by 1989 Draft EIR

**Subsurface Investigation of Bulb Sliver Area, Santa Fe Landfill. (September, 1988)**

Levine-Fricke

Results of an additional test bore on northeast corner of Bulb -- showed relatively low levels of toxicity; soil stability and suitability for foundation work not analyzed.

**Landfill characterization study: Albany Landfill. (September, 1988)**

EMCON Associates

Reviewed soil, waste, leachate, and Bay water quality to determine if Bulb is safe for public access to the satisfaction of State Department of Parks and State Coastal Conservancy. (relevant data, largely repeated and superseded by 1994 reports).

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**Air quality Solid Waste Assessment Test (SWAT) report for city of Albany landfill. (Oct. 1988)**

Brown and Calwell

Results of below-ground air quality testing on Bulb to determine presence of gaseous contamination – no significant pollutants found at any of 5 test locations.

**Geotechnical and Earthquake Engineering Report: Santa Fe Pacific Albany Waterfront Project. (January, 1989)**

Levine-Fricke (for Santa Fe Pacific Realty Corp)

Discusses geological suitability for different types of foundations on each subsection of Santa Fe (now Magna) lands, including grandstand, race track, northern parking lot, plateau. (appears to be the most comprehensive soils testing to date); nine bore holes and 20 test pits; makes recommendations for types of foundations appropriate for each site and static and seismic loads.

**Program EIR Geotechnical Sections: Santa Fe Albany Waterfront Project. (April, 1989)**

Anttonen & Hee, consulting geologists for Nichols Berman

Reviews work of Levine-Fricke, (Jan. 1989) and previous geotechnical studies; applies it to seven program alternatives in Draft EIR, September, 1989.

**Draft Program EIR - Albany Waterfront Lands. (September, 1989)**

Nichols Berman for Santa Fe Realty Corporation application

Expands on and supercedes 1987 Draft EIR; summarizes factors that constrain development of the site including physical, geotechnical, legal, land use, zoning, economic, traffic, noise, air quality, hydrology, climate, vegetation, wildlife, energy, public services, health and safety, and aesthetics; examines likely impact and possible mitigation required by each of seven different development alternatives. The development alternatives have varying amounts of commercial/recreational development and undeveloped open space ranging from 300,000 square feet of commercial development with 128 acres of open space to 4.5 Million square feet of commercial/recreational development with 72 acres of open space. Accompanying this report are three volumes of public comments and responses to the comments.

**Solid Waste Assessment Test for the City of Albany Landfill. - Appendices (November, 1994)**

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### 3E Engineering

Appendices to the 1995 Test Report.

#### **Solid Waste Assessment Test for the City of Albany Landfill. (April, 1995)**

### 3E Engineering

Reviews leachate and groundwater on the Bulb; determined that the leachate is isolated from the Bay and that it is contaminated with Ammonia, but is otherwise suitable to be pumped out and treated in the standard sewage treatment system; seven leachate sites were created and monitored for this study; primary purpose to evaluate if capping and sealing the site was necessary for its closure.

#### **Sediment Data Quality Evaluation: East Shore Properties. (May, 1996)**

### ERM-West, Inc.

Collects and summarizes existing sediment data on seven Catellus properties on the east shore of the San Francisco Bay; study was looking for toxins in the sediment; Albany Plateau one of sample sites summarized; metals, petroleum by-products, PCBs and DDTs were found in concentrations similar to control areas in other parts of the estuary.

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## **Development Proposals**

### **The Santa Fe Plan (Jan., 1968)**

Victor Gruen Associates.

Broad overview of Santa Fe's proposed, multi-year development plans for all their holdings from the base of the bay bridge to Pt. Richmond; good map; (but no data and probably not of current use)

### **Albany Waterfront Plan: Conservation and Enhancement of the Tideland Area (1969)**

Leon Rimov and Assoc.

Outlines proposed Albany Isles project including building 3 islands totaling over 100 acres with 300,000 sq. ft. of development – primarily a “boatel”, shops and restaurants; guide for soil tests; designates land uses on each proposed island; further refines shoreline and water front element of city's adopted General Plan; outlines actions needed to move plan forward.

### **Albany Isles Waterfront Plan (1969)**

Leon Rimov & Assoc.

Summarizes plan and details the various stages: reclamation (i.e. creation of 105 acres of islands with infill), development of land with recreation, retail, restaurant, “boatel” and ferry facilities on Island B and the undeveloped islands, A and C, the bird sanctuary island.

### **Waterfront Development Plan Proposal (December, 1974)**

SWR (Sasaki, Walker, Roberts, Inc.)

Details work that SWR plans to do in developing recommendations; no data

### **Waterfront Development: Phase I. (May, 1975)**

SWR(Sasaki, Walker, Roberts, Inc.)

Evaluates “the existing economic, environmental, and political conditions and determine the feasibility of pursuing any type of project development on the Albany Waterfront;” includes range of potential costs and possible funding sources for various possible developments; introduction has detailed and useful time line of development efforts including how and why Albany Isles was never implemented; presents four different development alternatives in detail – potential development options scaled back from Albany Isles; “Environmental Baseline” section possibly relevant data; 40

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pages describing aspects of environmental conditions in 1975; Appendix B includes migratory bird survey of Albany Mud flats.

**Final Report: Albany Waterfront Improvement Project (Albany Isles)**

**Albany Waterfront: Planning and Feasibility Study. Part 1 (1976)**

Environ.

Comprehensive waterfront plan with particular emphasis on potential development and use of landfill which extends into SF Bay; plan to develop the Bulb, adding marina and shops, with minimum of new in-fill; master plan for waterfront consisting entirely of water related activities, with small craft marina, commercial complex, and extensive park facilities as basic elements; background section includes history; Existing Site section possibly useful; master plan and financial and engineering analysis outdated; 108 pages with 30 pages of indices; geotechnical study from Albany Isles project incorporated in index.

**Albany Small-Craft Marina: Section 107 Report (January, 1980)**

Army Corps of Engineers

Details several alternatives for building marina at Bulb; extensive review of environmental conditions at bulb.

**Rancho San Antonio Development Proposal. (2004)**

Magna Entertainment Corp.

Proposal for 800,000 sq. ft. of new commercial, retail and lodging development on GGF Albany lands with additional development on Berkeley lands; almost entirely planned for Fleming Pt. portion of site with northern section remaining as surface parking.

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## **Public Sector Master Plans**

### **Phase One Report: Albany Waterfront Specific Plan. July 1985**

The Planning Collaborative

Identifies key planning issues, sets forth goals and objectives and formulates conceptual development alternatives. The goals for the waterfront in this plan include: 1) mix of uses which provide for maximum feasible open space and public access and 2) future plans must generate long term revenues sufficient to replace existing revenues. The objectives section details specific ways to meet each goal. This report was relied on heavily for the Draft EIRs of 1987 and 1989.

### **City of Albany General Plan: 1990-2010. (December, 1992)**

Newman Planning Assoc.

Reviewed summary sections of General Plan and those directly applicable to waterfront, including: land use policies and goals, open space, the Albany waterfront, conservation, recreation. and open space.

### **A proposal for the Albany Portion of the Eastshore State Park. (June, 1995)**

Albany City Waterfront Committee

Four-year planning process undertaken by Waterfront Committee prior to the creation of the Eastshore State Park; supported by input from public survey and comments from public meetings; intended to inform EBRPD of Albany residents desires for enhancements of Albany lands within ESSP; makes specific proposals for acquisition and enhancement of each section including Bulb and Neck, Plateau, Beach, Fleming Point, horseman's lot, and Bay Trail; sets priorities for each recommendation.

### **Eastshore Park Transaction Proposal. (May, 1996)**

Catellus Resource Group

Inventories and assesses value of lands sold by Catellus to the State to be incorporated into the Eastshore State Park; contains Environmental and Ecological Characterization of all lands sold including the Albany Plateau.

### **Eastshore Park Project: Resource Summary. (June, 2001)**



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Wallace Robert & Todd

Inventory of habitat, recreation, aesthetic, cultural, and environmental resources found within Eastshore Park; summarizes land use, traffic, and utilities that affect public usage and development of park

**Eastshore State Park General Plan. (December, 2002)**

Incorporates Resource Summary of 2001; outlines goals and objectives for enhancement of Eastshore Park lands; sets specific plans for each section of park including Plateau, Neck, and beach

**Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan: Albany, California. (Draft report, August, 2004)**

MIG, Inc.

Policies for improving, maintaining, and expanding Albany park and recreation system; proposes strategy for funding improvements and maintenance.

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## Financial Studies

### **Albany Isles Launching Facility Feasibility Report (1970)**

Bisell & Karn, Civil Engineers

Feasibility of boat launching ramp on “Island B;” includes engineering requirements, cost-benefit analysis, projected recreational demand, and final recommendations.

### **(Draft) Market Analysis for the Albany Waterfront EIR. (May 1987)**

Economic and Planning Systems

Discloses potential market risks to the city; “estimates ability of regional market to absorb proposed developments;” economic snapshot; numbers out of date.

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### **Public Planning Workshop Documents**

#### **Albany Small-Craft Marina: Public Workshops (undated)**

Army Corps of Engineers

History and Marina alternatives presented to the public.

#### **Strategic Planning Process for the Waterfront Lands. (1990-91)**

Robert C. Einsweiler, Inc. (at the request of Waterfront Committee)

Results of public meetings and group interviews conducted by Minnesota-based consulting firm; intended to break stalemate that resulted from Catellus/Ladbroke development proposals in 1980s.

#### **GGF Public Planning Workshops. (January and April, 2003)**

Video of public meetings focused on 2002 Rancho San Antonio development proposal; cut short when proposal pulled.

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## Traffic Studies

### Golden Gate Race Track Traffic Study. (July, 1995)

Baymetrics Traffic Resources

Raw traffic counts from Buchanan St. And Gilman St. entrances as well as Fleming Pt. parking lot; old data.

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## Miscellaneous

### **Correspondence file: City of Albany with California Dept. of Navigation and Ocean Development (DNOD), 1975 to 1979 (150 pages)**

Documents efforts by city to secure a loan (between \$7 and 10 Million) for construction of marina on Bulb; entangled with Prop. 13 limiting funds available for tax increment funding.

### **Application to the BCDC for the closure of the Albany Landfill. (November, 1983)**

Materials accepted into landfill historically and then-current environmental conditions of Bulb; application is for sealing and capping landfill, later determined not necessary.

### **Comments and Appendices on Draft Program EIR (1986 draft) for Berkeley Waterfront Plan**

Edward C. Moore, Jr.

Reaction and comments related to original draft EIR for proposed Santa Fe waterfront lands of Albany and Berkeley; special emphasis on aesthetic qualities of lands and potential for imparting relieve and release to the minds and needs of city dwellers

### **Albany Point State Park. (May, 1989)**

Hitesh Mehta (prepared for: partial fulfillment of Master in Landscape Architecture degree, UC Berkeley)

Comprehensive redesign of Albany Bulb including marina, restaurants, swimming area, and boardwalks over reconstructed marsh.

### **Waterfronts in Post Industrial Cities (2001)**

Richard Marshall

### **Creating the Eastshore State Park: An activist history. (2002)**

Norman La Force (grant from State Coastal Conservancy)

Historical account by participant in decades-long effort to develop public park on San Francisco East Bay shoreline between Emeryville and Richmond; chronicles many efforts to develop shoreline lands; follows long process of visioning, funding, and acquiring lands for Eastshore Park.

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### **Remaking the Urban Waterfront**

Urban Land Institute (ULI), published 2004

### **Mudflat Art to Sniff Painting: “Matter out of place” along the East Bay Landfill. (May, 2006)**

Lara Belkind, PhD Candidate, Harvard University

Academic paper on the “outsider art” of East Bay shoreline; puts Emeryville Mudflat and Albany Bulb art movements into greater context of previous “high” and “low” art movements.

### **Albany Shoreline: A Visual History. (Fall, 2006)**

Susan Moffat

Exhibit of images and presentation of the Albany Waterfront’s history by Susan Moffat. Video.

### **The Green Loop: a sustainable vision for the Albany Waterfront. (Fall, 2006)**

Susan Moffat (masters thesis, UC Berkeley)

Plan for connecting waterfront to city, enlarging current parklands, and building housing, education and recreation facilities on property; designed to draw people to shoreline and foster greater sense of place and community; historical and contextual sections

### **Hometown Project: Albany, CA. (May, 2008)**

Elanna Mariniello (Albany HS grad, currently student at Sarah Lawrence College, NY)

Undergraduate academic paper on Albany with specific references to how potential waterfront development has affected city; provides youth perspective on Albany culture and values.

### **ABAG Memo: Regional Adoption of Priority Conservation Areas. (July, 2008)**

Details status of applications for lands to be included as Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs) under the FOCUS program

Listen Learn  
Consider Contemplate  
Dream Discuss  
Prioritize Propose  
Analyze Articulate  
**Envision** the Albany Waterfront

**A**lbany **T**hinks

**A**lbany **T**alks

**A**lbany **T**ogether

**AT the Waterfront**



# **Voices to Vision**

Albany at the Waterfront

ENGAGE

DISCUSS

GUIDE

ENVISION

**EDGE**

Albany at the Waterfront