

Estuary Policy Plan

Oakland, California

June 1999



CITY OF OAKLAND



PORT OF OAKLAND

Estuary Policy Plan

Oakland, California

June 1999 (Reprinted October 2000)



CITY OF OAKLAND



PORT OF OAKLAND

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	vii
Section I: Background	1
Introduction	3
Study History	3
Purpose and Role of the Plan	6
Plan Organization	7
The Estuary Shoreline	11
Multiple Jurisdictions	14
Trends in Military Use of the Shoreline	15
Emerging Roles for the Estuary Shoreline	18
Section II: Objectives	21
Land Use	23
Market Trends	23
Issues and Opportunities	28
Land Use Objectives	29
Shoreline Access and Public Spaces	33
Shoreline Access	33
Issues and Opportunities	36
Shoreline Access & Public Space Objectives	37

Regional Circulation & Local Street Network	43
Barriers	43
Issues and Opportunities	44
Regional Circulation & Local Street Network Objectives	45
Section III: District Recommendations	51
Jack London District	53
Land Use	56
Shoreline Access and Public Spaces	67
Regional Circulation, Local Street Improvements Transit & Parking	73
Oak to Ninth Street District	83
Shoreline Access & Public Spaces	86
Land Use	92
Regional Circulation & Local Access	95
San Antonio/Fruitvale District	103
Land Use	103
Shoreline Access & Public Spaces	113
Regional Circulation & Local Street Improvements	116
Section IV: Moving Forward	125
Steps Towards Implementing the Estuary Policy Plan	127
Summary of Land Use Classifications	132
 Appendix:	 139
A. Jack London District Potential Designated Historic Properties & Districts	141
 Index.....	 142
Credits	144

List of Figures

I-1. Regional Context	4
I-2. Oakland Neighborhoods Adjacent to Estuary	5
I-3. Planning Area Districts	7
1-4. Activity Centers	13
I-5. Jurisdictions	16 & 17
II-1. Existing Land Use	24 & 25
II-2. Existing Public Access and Open Space	34 & 35
II-3. Illustrative Shoreline Access and Public Space Plan	40 & 41
II-4. Illustrative Circulation Plan	46 & 47
III-1. Jack London District: Current Ownership	54
III-2. Jack London District: Existing Land Use	55
III-3. Central Jack London District: Illustrative Development Strategy	58
III-4. Jack London District: Existing Public Access and Open Space	65
III-5. Jack London District: Illustrative Shoreline Access and Public Space Plan	66
III-6. Jack London District: Illustrative Circulation	72
III-7a & b. Jack London District Illustrative Street Cross Sections	76 & 78
III-8. Oak to 9th District: Current Ownership	84
III-9. Oak to 9th District: Existing Land Use	85
III-10. Oak to 9th District Illustrative Public Space Key Map	87
III-11. Oak to 9th: Bird's-Eye Illustrative Perspective	89
III-12. Clinton Basin Illustrative Cross Section	96 & 97
III-13. 5th Avenue Illustrative Cross Section	98
III-14. Oak to 9th District: Illustrative Circulation	99
III-15. San Antonio/Fruitvale District: Current Ownership	104
III-16. San Antonio/Fruitvale District: Existing Land Use	105
III-17. San Antonio/Fruitvale District Sub-District Map	106
III-18. San Antonio/Fruitvale District: Illustrative Cross Sections	117
III-19. San Antonio/Fruitvale Illustrative Circulation	118 & 119

III-20. San Antonio/Fruitvale District: Illustrative
 Cross Sections (cont'd)120 & 121
III-21. Fruitvale Avenue Illustrative Cross Sections122
IV-1. Land Use Classifications 130 & 131

Appendix

A. Jack London District Potential Designated
 Historic Properties & Districts..... 141

Executive Summary

As the twenty-first century approaches, national and international trends have created new opportunities for the urban waterfront and its role for the City of Oakland. Recognizing this potential and the strategic nature of the Oakland Estuary, the Port of Oakland and City of Oakland have undertaken the preparation of this plan to reinforce Oakland's identity as a livable city on the bay.

The "Estuary Policy Plan" (Also referred to as the 'Estuary Plan') includes objectives and policies to enhance the future of the area of Oakland between Adeline Street, the Nimitz Freeway, 66th Avenue and the Estuary shoreline. The plan is a result of community concerns first articulated by the League of Women Voters in its award-winning report entitled "The Waterfront: It Touches the World; How Does It Touch Oakland?", subsequently

reinforced by the goals, objectives and policies established by the General Plan Congress in the 1998 update of the Oakland General Plan.

The basic premise of the plan and its preceding efforts is that the Estuary is a resource of citywide and regional significance. This area cannot be viewed as a single-purpose district isolated from the city, but rather as a diverse and multifaceted place that connects the city and the bay.

The Estuary Policy Plan calls for a system of open spaces and shoreline access that provides recreational use opportunities, environmental enhancement, interpretive experiences, visual amenities, and significant gathering places. A series of individual parks, open spaces and shoreline access points, connected by a con-

tinuous landscaped parkway with promenades, bikeways and shoreline trails, is recommended. In addition to enhancing existing facilities, new parks are proposed at the mouth of the Lake Merritt Channel, at the site of the Ninth Avenue Terminal, at Union Point, and within the Jack London District.

Further, the Estuary Plan proposes a variety of uses that strengthen Oakland's position as an urban center, accommodate economic growth, and encourage development that complements the downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.

The plan reinforces the Jack London District as the East Bay's primary dining and entertainment venue, by promoting mixture of retail, dining, entertainment and visitor-serv-

ing uses oriented to significant gathering places and public access areas along the water.

The plan proposes the preservation of industrial areas which are necessary to support Oakland's port, as well as the city's role in food processing, manufacturing and distribution. In addition, the emerging trend toward loft-type residential and off-price retail establishments in the Jack London District is encouraged to continue.

The plan proposes the large-scale transformation of the area from the Lake Merritt Channel to the Ninth Avenue Terminal into a mix of artisan work/live lofts, hotel, cultural and commercial-recreational uses that will complement the planned open spaces and parks along the water.

The plan recommends strengthening the livability of existing and future residential development within the Kennedy Tract, and suggests new opportunities for small-scale office, business and commercial establishments. In certain areas (e.g., around the Con-Agra facility in the San Antonio/Fruitvale District), the plan supports the retention of existing industries, but acknowledges that they may relo-

cate for a variety of reasons. If that occurs, the plan suggests land use priorities for an appropriate transition to new urban development in the future.

The Estuary Policy Plan also proposes significant measures to improve both regional and local access. The proposed circulation system is aimed at reducing the barrier effect of the freeway by improving on and off ramps and by enhancing local vehicular access to inland areas.

The plan recommends creating a continuous landscaped recreational parkway, accommodating pedestrians and bicycles as well as transit and vehicular access, along the entire five-and-a-half-mile length of waterfront, between 66th Avenue and the Jack London District. This parkway would help knit together the diverse parts of the Estuary shoreline, thereby establishing an identity of Oakland as a waterfront city.

The Estuary Policy Plan also emphasizes the need for connection between waterfront uses and inland areas. The plan promotes entertainment-oriented development in the Jack London District, and extending waterfront ac-

tivities along Lower Broadway, toward the downtown. At the same time, development of the area between Estuary Park and the Ninth Avenue Terminal will create a significant place for Oaklanders to gather for events, and achieve a long-held objective of connecting the Estuary to the Lake Merritt Channel, Lake Merritt, and inland neighborhoods.

Redevelopment at Embarcadero Cove is planned to create additional windows to the Estuary. A new park at Union Point and improvements to the shoreline should create a new focus along the water for Brooklyn Basin, San Antonio, Fruitvale, Central East Oakland, and other inland neighborhoods. Extension of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Regional Shoreline westward to High Street will also provide open space opportunities for East Oakland residents and visitors to enjoy the environment of San Leandro Bay.

Finally, the Estuary Policy Plan recommends some critical first steps in implementing the plan and achieving the vision. It identifies what is necessary to move on to the next level of action.

In total, the Estuary Policy Plan is a waypoint in a community-wide dialogue that has been underway for many years. It follows up on ideas that were first presented several decades ago; more recently reinforced by the League of Women Voters and the Oakland General Plan. It is both a recognition of the importance of this unique asset to Oakland, and a long-range vision of the Estuary's potential.

At the same time, the plan initiates a series of steps that can achieve the vision. By beginning now, and working hard, Oakland can enhance the waterfront, fulfill its unmet potential, and reclaim its role as a true waterfront city.

