

Theme park for Treasure Island urged

City-sponsored report points to Singapore 'pleasure island' as model

By Gerald D. Adams
EXAMINER URBAN PLANNING WRITER

A future Treasure Island theme park should become a playland of lakes, fountains, monuments and sculptures that once decorated the island's 1939-1940 world's fair.

Hotels should be built for the tourists and city residents ferried by boat to the \$300 million theme park, which should charge admission of \$25-\$35.

Those recommendations are contained in a 194-page report, the Naval Station Treasure Island Re-use Plan, the most detailed official look The City has yet produced for the civilian future of the mid-Bay mudfill and its adjoining key, Yerba Buena Island.

Sponsored by The City's Office of Military Base Conversion, the Planning Department and Redevelopment Agency, it may be endorsed by the Planning Commission as early as Thursday.

The report discloses several new ideas for Treasure and Yerba Buena islands, including a high-end, 150-room hotel for the wooded western tip of Yerba Buena Island. Another 1,300 hotel rooms could be built on Treasure Island.

The authors say The City must work to attract fun seekers to the theme park, in part, by illuminating the islands at night with fireworks and searchlights. It should be decorated in ways that are "showy, dramatic and large scale," the report says.

susceptibility to earthquake damage, reinforcement of the island's perimeter dike and the Yerba Buena Island causeway is essential, the report says.

The island is about to be designated as a seismic hazard zone by the California Division of Mines and Geology, according to the report.

Model for the theme park

Proposing a model for the desired theme park, Roma Design Group, the plan's authors, put forth Sentosa, Singapore's 827-acre island playground which is reached by an aerial cable car or ferry ride.

The Far East city's pleasure island includes beaches, golf courses,

The report emphasizes the need for public transportation, saying visitors must use ferries or buses to reach the island.

Retreat-like accommodations

Bonnie Fisher of the Roma design firm, a planning consultant to The City, said the Yerba Buena Island hotel might be a series of "casitas" or small houses situated on a steep sylvan hillside looking onto The City.

Gloria Root, a planner who chairs a citizens' advisory committee, suggested the hotel could be designed as a series of terraces cascading down the forested hillside.

It would be "a little inn to help produce revenue if it looks like there's a market for it," Fisher said.

Certainly revenue is needed, the report makes clear, to offset the expenses to make the island ready for its conversion to civilian use. The Navy is due to close its operations on the two islands in 1997.

Among Treasure Island's needs are fire, police and medical services, as well as ferry service, shuttle buses and reinforcements of its perimeter dike and the causeway that connects Treasure Island to Yerba Buena Island. One of two road connections between the two

a rock museum, a history museum, computerized musical fountains, a butterfly display, restaurants and a monorail linking each attraction.

A company that wanted to develop a Treasure Island Sentosa could expect costs of about \$300 million, but plan admission prices "on the order of \$25 to \$35," according to the report.

Other uses already indicated for Treasure Island include more space for film crews now using airplane hangars as movie stages, a sports complex; hotels, festivals, exhibitions, museums, golf, restaurants and expositions.

Among the certain uses slated are a U.S. Job Corps, which will occupy about 36 acres for training 850 youths beginning in 1997. The

A city report for the future use of Treasure and Yerba Buena islands calls for:

- ▶ A high-end, 150-room hotel on the wooded western tip of Yerba Buena Island. Rooms would be priced about the same as at better downtown hotels.
- ▶ Another 1,300 hotel rooms on Treasure Island.
- ▶ Up to 2,500 housing units, with "significant limitations on auto use" placed on occupants.
- ▶ About 300 units of housing for homeless people.

SOURCE: City of San Francisco

EXAMINER GRAPHICS

islands, the causeway has been closed to traffic since a March landslide.

The cost of achieving the plan's rosy goals is estimated at \$263 million, an amount that would be partially offset by revenues of \$150 million to \$226 million, leaving The City with a shortfall of \$38 million to \$113 million over the next 35 years, according to the report.

Although the authors recommend providing housing on both islands, access problems suggest the ideal tenants would be atypical Bay Area residents. They suggest a retirement community, or setting aside the housing for the 8,300 people expected to be working on the island and to those engaged in environmental studies.

In other words, housing should be reserved for people unlikely to drive on the Bay Bridge during peak-use periods.

To carry people between the mainland and the islands, the report proposes that ferry services be provided at 10- to 15-minute intervals during rush hour.

Because of Treasure Island's

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Fire Department's firefighting school is on the island, as is the Navy's brig, which the San Francisco Sheriff's Department is using to house female prisoners.