





## 4 Imagining the Possibilities

One of the unquestionably greatest successes of waterfront development in the United States is found in downtown Chicago. The Chicago Lakefront evolution has tremendous parallels to the Baylands.

The Lakefront park system including the world-renowned Millennium Park was built on an industrial wasteland. A landfill, railyard, and shipyard from the 1850's until the late 20th century, the public-private vision that has led to a 250-acre system of open space, museums, trails, entertainment venues, and parks is one of the most successful case-studies of waterfront development in the world.

The Baylands are a complete blank slate of waterfront development potential. This is probably one of the largest regularly-shaped undeveloped urban waterfront sites currently available in the United States. Compared to Chicago, this could be a year-round amenity with weather that is mild and accessible throughout all 12 months, making such open space potentially much more utilized than anywhere else in the Country.

The preceding page contains a brief snapshot of some of the sights of the Chicago Lakefront. The contrast with the aforementioned peninsula development pattern in the vicinity of the Baylands should be immediately obvious.

### 4.1 Immediate Benefits to All

Access to the waterfront is a public right in California. The views and enjoyment of the same should also be a public right in the City of Brisbane. Creating a Waterfront Preservation District that is more than just a few token patches of lawn with a running trail would be an immediate lifestyle benefit that would encourage a multitude of uses and enrich the lives of everyone in Brisbane and beyond.

The benefits would be immediate, would not be subject to the business park risks mentioned above, and would have large economic impact. There is virtually no substantial waterfront development of this sort on the Peninsula. It would be unique, desirable, and compliment the other tremendous assets that Brisbane has in terms of its natural setting, vibrant community, and proximity to San Francisco and the South Bay.

Not only would direct use of such an area be a benefit, but it would allow filtration of stormwater and catchment of some airborne litter to help improvement of the Bay water quality be a primary focus rather than an afterthought.

The current plan to expand a trash processing plant and monopolize the waterfront with buildings up to 200' above sea level does not provide benefits to all, removes the waterfront from the public space, and ignores that many lessons learned from the waterfront development experiences elsewhere such as in Chicago.

A trash plant, for example, is not the highest and best use for this land. A trash plant is not only a negative amenity for its odors, litter, and unsightliness, but also presents additional risks such as fire and explosion due to the inherent handling of raw and possible hazardous materials [5].

### 4.2 Real Economic Benefits

San Diego Magazine considered five cities as potential models for new waterfront development. They wrote about Chicago the following in 2011 [25]:

*...Chicago has done more than any other American city to foster beauty in its public realm over the past 20 years. The shining example is Millennium Park, the 24-acre jewel in the northwest corner of Grant Park on the site of a former parking lot.*

*This "art park"—which features world-class commissions created by Anish Kapoor and Jaume Plensa, stunning architecture including a pavilion and bridge by Frank Gehry and an addition to the Art Institute by Renzo Piano, plus brilliant landscape design —has become an economic blockbuster for the North Michigan*

*Avenue neighborhood since opening in 2004.*

*The numbers tell a compelling story:*

- *The increase in value of adjacent real estate, directly attributable to Millennium Park, is projected to be \$1.4 billion over the next 10 years.*
- *Hotels will benefit over the next decade to the tune of \$482 million to \$586 million; retailers, \$529 million to \$711 million; and restaurants, \$672 million to \$867 million.*
- *In its first six months, the park attracted more than 2 million visitors. Now its 3 million annually, including international tourists who spend \$300 per day on average, according to City studies.*

*Millennium Park and The Bean (the affectionate name for the Kapoor sculpture) have become the new post-card images for the City, as well as a source of enormous civic pride. It's important to note that this public space was achieved over the objections of many who claimed the expenditure was frivolous or wasteful.*

*What Mayor Richard Daley understands is that investment in creating a beautiful public realm, whether through art, landscape or programming, has created extraordinary value by attracting even greater private investment.*

The income benefits include revenue opportunities for everyone, not just for City Hall. Property appreciation throughout the surrounding area is continuing today. The attraction of new and desirable retail and services tenants to existing real estate supply was experienced rather than cannibalization caused by constructing another new mall.