

Preface



AN AERIAL VIEW OF FORT SCOTT, CAPTURED IN 2001

In 1972, in recognition of its spectacular setting, important historical resources, and rich ecological and scenic attributes, Congress decreed that if the U.S. Army no longer needed the Presidio of San Francisco, it would become part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA), the country's largest national park in an urban area. In 1989, the U.S. Army announced that the oldest continuously operating military post in the country would be closed, and so the Presidio became a park for the American people.

The very characteristics that distinguish the Presidio - its many historic buildings, cultural landscapes, and urban location - also make it expensive to preserve and operate. In 1996, in recognition of the Presidio's singular character and of the challenges and expense attending its preservation, Congress took a further step and established the Presidio Trust. Congress reasoned that "an innovative public/private partnership that minimizes cost to the United States Treasury" was necessary to oversee the Presidio as a distinct part of the GGNRA.¹

1 The 1,491-acre Presidio of San Francisco is at the center of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA), which was created by Congress in 1972. The GGNRA legislation ensured that if the military deemed the Presidio excess to its needs, jurisdiction would be transferred to the National Park Service (NPS). In 1989, the Presidio was designated for closure and in 1994, the U.S. Army transferred the Presidio to the NPS. In 1996, the Presidio Trust Act (see Appendix A) gave jurisdiction of the 1,168-acre inland area of the Presidio known as Area B to the Presidio Trust; the NPS continues to manage the shoreline, or Area A. See Appendix B for additional background.



FIGURE 1.1 GGNRA CONTEXT MAP

■ Golden Gate National Recreation Area
■ Adjacent Open Space

GGNRA CONTEXT MAP

To limit taxpayer liability for the Presidio’s ongoing costs, Congress required that the park be financially self-sufficient by 2013, and gave the Trust the authority to lease property in order to generate the revenues needed to operate the park and undertake the necessary capital improvements. No other unit of the national park system operates in the same way or under the same stricture.

If viewed alone, however, the financial imperative imposed by Congress presents a distorted picture of what the Trust must accomplish. The Trust can achieve financial self-sufficiency in any number of ways, but if it does so without having created the financial base to ensure the rehabilitation of the Presidio’s historic buildings and landscapes, the restoration of its natural resources, and the preservation of its distinct character, the Trust will not have accomplished its mission.

The Trust’s financial requirement and its mandate to preserve and protect the park cannot be separated. This mandate is central to everything that the Presidio Trust does, from rehabilitating and leasing historic buildings to restoring historic landscapes and protecting rare and endangered species. It is the purpose behind the Trust’s work and the guiding principle of the *Presidio Trust Management Plan: Land Use Policies for Area B of the Presidio of San Francisco* (PTMP, or Plan).

The Plan makes clear that the appearance of the Presidio will not substantially change over time and that the park will thrive. First and foremost, the Plan ensures the preservation of the Presidio’s National Historic Landmark District, the restoration of valuable natural resources, and the opportunity for diverse and meaningful visitor experiences, while ensuring the long-term environmental and financial sustainability of the park. The Plan is not an implementation plan, but a statement of policy that is intended to guide future implementation decisions. It is the result of an extensive public process, and anticipates further detailed planning and public input.



FIGURE 1.4
AREA A & B BOUNDARIES

--- Area B Boundary

BOUNDARIES OF AREAS A & B



THE PTMP IS A FRAMEWORK FOR PRESERVING THE PRESIDIO AS A GREAT NATIONAL PARK IN THE HEART OF A BUSTLING URBAN AREA

Ongoing public involvement will be critical to the Presidio's success. This Plan is a framework to which members of the public are invited to continue devoting their creative energy and carefully considered thoughts. The Trust pledges to involve the public, not only in the more specific planning that will follow adoption of this framework, but also in the actual work of preserving the park. In this way, the magical qualities of this spectacular place and the excitement that accompanies its sustainable restoration will be shared with the people for whom the Presidio has been saved as a national park.

When Yellowstone was set aside for the public 130 years ago, we forever changed the way we would view our land. Since then, the national park idea has been expanded to embrace historic sites as well as urban recreation areas, extending the benefits of the national park system to more of the American public. In the past two years, a third of all American adults visited a national park.²

The Trust will collaborate with the National Park Service (NPS), as well as other partners, to ensure that a broad cross-section of the American public has many opportunities to explore the Presidio, to understand its rich history, and to appreciate its diverse natural resources. Through collaboration and increased opportunities for public involvement, the Trust will build a constituency that may change over time, but will always care for the park.

² *"Rethinking the National Parks for the 21st Century," National Park System Advisory Board Report 2001, page 7*

The Vision



AS A FORMER ARMY POST, THE PRESIDIO IS HOME TO AN INCREDIBLE ARRAY OF HISTORIC AND NON-HISTORIC BUILDINGS

The Trust has a responsibility to the nation that moved to protect the Presidio, first as a National Historic Landmark District, and then as a national park. The Trust also recognizes the love that so many people have for the Presidio, and shares their desire that the park have a great future. That passion has been articulated throughout the planning process for the Presidio for more than a decade. In 1994, the NPS General Management Plan Amendment (GMPA) presented a vision for the Presidio that captured the imagination of the local public: the Presidio should not simply be preserved, but should be preserved to serve a vision greater than itself. The former military post would become a global center dedicated to addressing the world's most critical challenges.³

For many, this vision resolved the dilemma posed by what distinguishes the Presidio from most national parks: it has a substantial amount of leasable property, and it is situated in the midst of a major urban area. The activities of leasing and managing real estate would no longer confound ideas of what a park should be - they would all have a purpose.

3 The GMPA was adopted in 1994 as the NPS plan for the entire Presidio (Areas A and B). The PTMP is the Presidio Trust's plan for Area B; the GMPA remains the management plan for Area A.

The vision set forth in the 1994 GMPA was based on one principal assumption, that Congress would continue to appropriate funds for the Presidio to supplement lease revenues. The PTMP, however, is built on a very different financial reality: annual federal appropriations to the Presidio will decrease to zero by 2013, making increased revenue generation critical to the operation and maintenance of the park over the long-term. Thus, while the PTMP owes much to the GMPA that preceded it, the Trust cannot share the vision that the Presidio should be preserved for a purpose beyond itself.

The Trust's vision is the one that was directed by Congress: to preserve the Presidio as a park for the American public.

This more focused vision alone is a formidable one. To preserve the Presidio, the Trust must embrace the history and landscape of this place. Historical sites are not abstractions, but "the fabric that binds America's past and present."⁴ Such places must be preserved through active reuse. The Presidio's military history reflects the history of the people who have shaped the physical, political, and social landscape of the West. Thus, this former military post is an ideal place for investigating our collective past, allowing visitors to address the issues before them with a deeper awareness of the nation's history.

That such an astonishingly beautiful place, home to many rare and endangered species, exists within an urban area makes it all the more valuable and critical to preserve. Its urban context means that more people will have the opportunity to experience the pleasure and peace of open space, to expand their experience of the natural world, and to understand better how species endure and what threatens their survival.



NATIVE PLANT COMMUNITIES AND THE HISTORIC FOREST HELP TO DEFINE THE CHARACTER OF THE PRESIDIO'S VAST OPEN SPACE

The Presidio is the legacy of the generations of people who lived here and cared for this post; that legacy will be carried forward with the same spirit. Our hope is to see the Presidio become home to an enduring community. We envision a place where public, private, and non-profit sectors come together and share their ideas and resources; where educators and students explore the world around

them; where artists, scientists, and storytellers pursue their passions; where parents and children play; where visitors deepen their understanding of the connections between human and natural history; and perhaps most important, where an individual, alone or in concert with others, can find peace of mind and personal inspiration.

The Plan



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE RANGER-LED WALK



HISTORIC FUNSTON AVENUE HOME



GATHERING SEEDS FOR RESTORATION PROJECTS

The first chapter of the Plan articulates the planning principles that will help the Presidio Trust realize its goals of preserving and enhancing the park's resources and bringing people to the park. Chapter Two sets forth area-wide, conceptual (rather than site-specific) land use preferences that will guide rehabilitation and leasing; it sets forth planned building square footage, open space acreage, and park-wide land uses. This chapter also describes the type and location of resident and visitor amenities, housing, and access and circulation improvements, as well as infrastructure and

maintenance programs. Chapter Three defines the characteristics of the seven planning districts that will be governed by this Plan and presents planning guidelines for each. Finally, Chapter Four explains how the Trust will address the financial constraints under which it must operate to manage the park.

“As part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the Presidio’s significant natural, historic, scenic, cultural and recreational resources must be managed in a manner which is consistent with sound principles of land use planning and management, and which protects the Presidio from development and uses which would destroy the scenic beauty and historic and natural character of the area and cultural and recreational resources.” (Presidio Trust Act)

The PTMP makes a commitment to:

- **More open space and less building space.** Over time, the Presidio Trust plans to increase the amount of open space at the Presidio by about 99 acres, largely by removing the Wherry Housing complex (Baker Beach Apartments) and some of the Washington Boulevard housing in the southern part of Area B. The Presidio Trust also plans to remove some non-historic housing in the East Housing district to restore the Tennessee Hollow stream corridor.

The Presidio Trust plans to reduce today’s 5.96 million square feet of building space to 5.6 million or less, primarily by reducing the number of non-historic buildings in the park. Buildings and activities, including workplaces, housing, and visitor amenities, will continue to be clustered in areas with high concentrations of historic buildings and easy access to transportation. The clustering of building space will reinforce community life, reduce automobile dependence, increase use of transit, and make both land use patterns and resource use more sustainable.

- **Public use.** The Presidio Trust plans to make available approximately one-third of all building space for public uses, including educational and cultural tenants such as resource management and conservation training organizations, schools, museums, and arts and historical organizations, as well as conference space, small-scale lodging, recreational uses, and visitor amenities, such as cafes and restaurants. The Trust and the National Park Service will collaborate to provide interpretive services, visitor orientation, and educational programs. These public uses will be located mainly in existing structures, although some circumstances may require limited new construction to replace building space removed elsewhere.
- **Residential and office uses to support the park.** Housing and offices have always been an essential component of the Presidio’s landscape, and will remain so. Many of the homes here contribute to the Presidio’s National Historic Landmark status, and office use is often the most effective way to reuse historic, non-residential buildings.

Non-historic housing that is removed to create open space will be replaced, if necessary, to meet planning objectives such as housing Presidio-based employees, financing natural resource enhancements, preserving historic buildings, or improving compatibility with the National Historic Landmark District. Replacement units may be created by subdividing large units into smaller ones or by converting non-residential buildings to housing. Construction of new housing would be subject to additional site-specific planning and public input. The number of housing units and other residential accommodations in the park will not exceed the current number (approximately 1,650).

A diverse group of office tenants is expected to occupy about one-third of the building space in the park. Given the Presidio’s location and the types of space available, the type of commercial

enterprises at home in “Class A” downtown space or suburban business parks are not likely to be a large part of the tenant mix.

- **Sustainable transportation and infrastructure systems.** The Presidio Trust will adhere to sustainable practices and environmentally sound technologies in maintaining and operating its facilities. The Presidio Trust is developing transportation strategies to minimize automobile use, including an aggressive transportation demand management (TDM) program, more options for public transit and pedestrian and bicycle travel, housing in the park for Presidio-based employees, and parking management.
- **Opportunities for public participation.** The Presidio Trust will use this Plan to guide future planning and land use decisions. The Plan is a long-term one, and must, therefore, be able to accommodate inevitable changes. In conformance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the Presidio Trust will offer opportunities for public input before making many implementation decisions.



ENJOYING A PRESIDIO BALL FIELD



PUBLIC PLANNING WORKSHOP



ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

Summary of Planning District Concepts



FIGURE I PLANNING DISTRICTS, EXISTING AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT AND PROPOSED OPEN

The PTMP sets forth land use preferences and development guidelines for the seven planning districts, as shown in Figure I. For each district, the concepts and guidelines address the different characteristics of the area, including open spaces, total building space, circulation, and access. These guidelines will inform future land use and implementation decisions.

1. Main Post

Heart of the Presidio/Visitor and Community Center

The Main Post will continue to be a focal point for visitor orientation as well as a community center where people live, work, and enjoy themselves. The district's rich historic buildings and landscapes will be preserved, the historic parade ground re-established, and other outdoor spaces rehabilitated.

2. Crissy Field (Area B)

Bayfront Recreation and Cultural Destination

The Trust will undertake site enhancements and historic building rehabilitation in Area B of Crissy Field to accommodate public uses and visitor amenities that complement the spectacular bayfront park of Area A. Important open space will be retained and natural resources will be protected. Some non-historic buildings may be retained and reused.

3. Letterman

Residential and Working Campus

The Letterman district will be home to the Letterman Digital Arts Center, occupied by one of the country's most creative and innovative enterprises. The district will continue to offer a mix of office and residential uses. Rehabilitation of open spaces will reinforce the campus feeling.

4. Fort Scott

Contemplative Retreat

The Trust will preserve Fort Scott's rich collection of historic buildings and landscapes in a manner that retains the district's contemplative setting. Preferred uses will include educational and conference facilities as well as complementary lodging, housing, and support services.

5. Public Health Service Hospital

Residential and Educational Community

Residential and educational uses will be sought for historic buildings in the former Public Health Service Hospital district. Habitat for rare and unique plant and wildlife species will be protected and enhanced.

6. East Housing

Residential Neighborhood and Nature's Refuge

The East Housing planning district will continue to be primarily residential. The Tennessee Hollow riparian corridor will be restored, and some non-historic housing will be removed if required to restore natural systems. Open space and forested areas will be preserved to provide wildlife habitat and a peaceful refuge for visitors.

7. South Hills

Outdoor Recreation and Woodland Retreat

A significant amount of non-historic housing and associated streets in this district will be removed over time to restore open space and natural systems, and to improve the quality of the visitor experience. The Cemetery will maintain its current size and configuration. The district will be a setting for contemplation, education, research, and recreation. A limited amount of housing will remain.

Implementing The Plan

The Presidio Trust's success will be measured largely by the timely rehabilitation and reuse of the Presidio's historic buildings and landscapes, the quality and quantity of open spaces that are created or enhanced, and the extent to which the park resources are understood and enjoyed by the public. Unlike parks characterized by tracts of wilderness, the Presidio's resources need active intervention to ensure their preservation. Therefore, the rate at which the Trust moves to protect resources will affect the Trust's ultimate ability to preserve the park.

What the Presidio Trust does today will have consequences for many years. The Trust is learning to understand and adhere to the values so vividly apparent throughout the Presidio in the balance between its historic buildings and the landscape. The harmony adds an aesthetic dimension that reflects the aspirations of the generations who transformed the Presidio through two centuries of living and working here. This balance helps to establish the standard to which the Presidio Trust will aspire and by which the Trust's success will be judged.



THE FORMER SIXTH U.S. ARMY HEADQUARTERS WAS REHABILITATED USING PRIVATE FUNDS INVESTED BY THE TENANT

Caring for the Presidio will be costly. Long-term success will depend on the Trust's ability to apply sound principles of finance and real estate management to a complex set of challenges, including changes in level and sources of revenue, timing of cash flow, market conditions, leasing risks, and cost controls. At present, annual appropriations and lease revenues are the principal sources of funds. Moving forward, the Trust must maximize revenues in the near-term to offset the loss of revenues in the future from housing that is slated for demolition, as well as to anticipate the end of the congressional appropriations. The quality and quantity of building space that is rehabilitated and leased between now and 2013 will determine how the Trust meets the initial threshold of financial self-sufficiency.

In managing and leasing non-residential properties, the Trust is committed to maintaining a diverse tenant mix. The Trust will neither limit the potential tenant pool to those of a particular business or purpose, nor set quotas related to organizational or business structure. Tenant diversity will create a robust community and a stable revenue stream. The Trust will select tenants on the basis of the following criteria: (1) ability to enhance the financial viability of the Presidio and facilitate the cost-effective preservation and reuse of an historic building, (2) contribution to the implementation of the general objectives of the GMPA (see box) and to the visitor experience, and (3) compatibility with the planning principles and preferred uses set forth in this Plan. In seeking tenants, the Trust will provide for reasonable competition; in making decisions that involve physical changes to the park, the Trust will seek public input in conformance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).

General Objectives of the GMPA

The Trust Act directs the Presidio Trust to manage the property under its jurisdiction in accordance with (1) the purposes of the Act establishing the GGNRA,¹ and (2) the “General Objectives” of the GMPA.

The General Objectives set forth in Presidio Trust Board Resolution 99-11 dated March 4, 1999 are:

- *To preserve and (where appropriate) enhance the historical, cultural, natural, recreational, and scenic resources of the Presidio.*
- *To address the needs of Presidio visitors, tenants, and residents for community services such as transportation, water, power, waste management, and public safety (among others) in an environmentally responsible manner, while respecting neighboring communities.*
- *To increase open space, consolidate developed space, and provide for appropriate uses of the Presidio, including uses that involve stewardship and sustainability, cross-cultural and international cooperation, community service and restoration, health and scientific discovery, recreation, the arts, education, research, innovation, and/or communication.*
- *To sustain the Presidio indefinitely as a great national park in an urban setting.*

1 The purposes of the GGNRA Act are as follows:

“In order to preserve for public use and enjoyment certain areas of Marin and San Francisco Counties, California, possessing outstanding natural, historic, scenic, and recreational values, and in order to provide for the maintenance of needed recreational open space necessary to urban environment and planning, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area is hereby established. In the management of the recreation area, the Secretary of the Interior shall utilize the resources in a manner which will provide for recreation and educational opportunities consistent with sound principles of land use planning and management. In carrying out the provisions of this Act, the Secretary shall preserve the recreation area, as far as possible, in its natural setting, and protect it from development and uses which would destroy the scenic beauty and natural character of the area.” (16 U.S.C. 460bb)

Plan Summary
*The Presidio Trust Management Plan:
Land Use Policies for Area B of the Presidio of San Francisco*

- *The Presidio will remain an open space haven with its natural, historic, scenic, cultural, and recreational resources preserved for public use and enjoyment.*
- *Open space and natural habitats will be preserved, enhanced, and increased.*
- *Over time, the Presidio Trust will reduce the total building area in the park by 360,000 square feet or more, from the 5.96 million square feet that exist today to 5.6 million square feet or less.*
- *The historic forest will be rehabilitated, wetlands enhanced, and native plant and wildlife species protected.*
- *The Presidio's National Historic Landmark status will be preserved; any changes within the landmark district will comply with the National Historic Preservation Act and be compatible with the park's setting.*
- *Public uses will invite and engage visitors to the park; employee housing will perpetuate the historic sense of community.*
- *Construction will be limited to developed areas, and will be compatible with existing structures.*
- *The Presidio Trust will apply sustainable design practices and promote energy and water conservation, waste reduction and recycling, and clean technologies.*
- *The Presidio Trust will discourage automobile use by promoting walking, biking, public transit, and internal shuttle use.*
- *Presidio tenants will be selected according to their conformance with PTMP planning principles, their ability to enhance the Presidio's financial viability, and their contribution to implementation of the general objectives of the GMPA.*
- *Public input will continue to be valued in ongoing planning for the Presidio's future.*

The Presidio Trust acknowledges and thanks the members of the public who contributed their time, knowledge, and energy to developing the Presidio Trust Management Plan: Land Use Policies for Area B of the Presidio of San Francisco.