

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION



DRAFT

URBAN GREENING PLAN

The City of Alameda provides its citizens with a full service Recreation and Parks Department which administers an extensive system of local parks, athletic fields, dog parks, skate parks, historical museums, gymnasiums, a model airplane field, community center and senior center.

In developing this document, Alameda had the foresight to create a community endorsed comprehensive vision to allow the City to strategically refine, renovate and enhance the park system to meet the evolving needs of the community.

In developing an “Urban Greening Plan” the City sought to look beyond the bounds of a typical parks master plan to explore a breadth of components that create livable communities.

The City sought and was awarded an Urban Greening Planning Grant from the multi-jurisdictional Strategic Growth Council (SGC), the public agency delegated with the responsibility of administering grant funds provided under the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006 (Proposition 84). The City’s grant application proposed integrating new planning efforts with existing planning documents (i.e., Local Action Plan for Climate Protection and Bay Friendly Landscape Ordinance) into a comprehensive citywide Urban Green Plan targeted at mitigation of the long-term effects of climate change and making the City a more sustainable and healthier community. The Urban Greening Plan will take an integrated approach to addressing new and existing parks and open space; streetscapes; trails for biking and walking; urban farming opportunities; stormwater retention; coastline protection; and other means of helping the City meet its greenhouse gas emissions reductions goals.

This Parks Master Plan is a key component of the Urban Greening Plan. It is divided into the following distinct Chapters:

CONTEXT

A successful Parks Master Plan is tailored to reflect the special characteristics and values of the community. In this chapter, unique demographics and the make-up of the community is explored as well as the regional recreational context.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

In this chapter the existing parks, facilities and programs were inventoried and evaluated. Potential park and urban agriculture sites were identified. Additionally, this study includes an inventory of all the existing trees within the parks and golf course as a foundation for management of the urban forest, which is contained in a separate Appendix.

COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

A recreational needs assessment was conducted through community surveys, workshops and stakeholder interviews to understand the strengths and deficiencies of the existing park system and recreation programs.

GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

Based on the needs assessment and existing conditions, quantifiable goals and objectives were established which outline the Alameda community vision for their Urban Greening Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

Finally, this chapter addresses specific recommendations and options for implementing the goals and objectives including renovation of existing facilities and sites, and opportunities for future expansion. This chapter also identifies costs associated with recommendations and implementation action items.

DRAFT

CHAPTER 2 - CONTEXT

DRAFT



THE SETTING

An island community in the San Francisco Bay, Alameda, a City of 22.7 square miles, has a current population of approximately 72,500 people. It has a temperate climate, with average temperatures in the 60's. It boasts one of the oldest Recreation and Parks Departments in the State of California, with almost 150 acres of municipal park land (not including the Chuck Corica Golf Complex). Although the parks of Alameda are a well used and highly valued amenity, the overall park acreage ratio is only about 2 acres of park per 1,000 residents, a fairly low ratio. Many of the parks are small, but effectively designed and programmed to meet much of the community's recreation needs. The parks system is well used and beloved. Parks are well distributed to provide easy access to a local park for the majority of residents.

Much of the City of Alameda is built out, with the exception of the former Alameda Naval Air Station (referred to as "Alameda Point") and thus, there are limited options for expanding parks or the park system. At this point in time, several opportunities have been identified for potential future park sites, the most significant being the former Alameda Belt Line Rail Yard and yet to be determined locations on Alameda Point. As planning proceeds for Alameda Point, park facilities and urban agriculture will be important elements of this effort.



Bay Area

Alameda

DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

The City of Alameda has undertaken this Urban Greening and Parks Master Plan to identify the residents' vision for their community that will guide future planning efforts. One component of such a plan is to understand how local demographics affect the Parks and Recreation program and facility needs and how the Alameda community's needs are either similar or different from state and national trends.

Population Forecast

The population of the City of Alameda has remained relatively unchanged from a population of 72,259 in 2000 to a population of 72,532 at the time of the 2010 Census. This is a population increase of less than half a percent. Over the next 25 years, the City's population is expected to grow at a slightly higher rate as the City approves and develops in-fill projects and residential development at Alameda Point. By 2015, the population is expected to reach 73,656 – a 1.6 percent increase from 2010. By 2030, it is projected to reach 80,000.

Length of Residency

The average length of owner occupied residency is 16 years and the renter length of residency is 8 years. This suggests that the community is rooted and vested in their hometown and hold an appreciation for their surroundings.

Age Distribution

A profile of the population's age provides important information to aid in parks and recreation programming since different age groups do have different needs and desires for parks and recreation facilities. Figure 1 shows the age groups within the City of Alameda. Worthy to note is that the 45-54 age group is the largest segment (17.8%). This percentage is also greater than that of the County of Alameda (14.8%), as shown in the age group comparison in Figure 2.

Although the total population of Alameda is not changing significantly, there will be shifts in the age of the residents within the City, according to the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). More specifically, there will be a dramatic increase in the population of residents aged 65 and older. This marked increase is a result of the Baby Boomer population aging.

Pre-school children aged 0 to 5 years comprise 5.5 percent (3,961) of the total population of Alameda. The majority of those preschoolers (3,098) live on Alameda Island compared to Bay Farm Island (863). School age youth from 5-17 years comprise 14.7% (10,647) of the population. This is the group targeted

DRAFT

	Zip Code 94501 (Alameda Island)		Zip Code 94502 (Bay Farm Island)		City of Alameda	
AGE GROUPS						
Median Age	41.9		45.2		42.3	
Average Age	41.0		40.7		40.9	
School Age	13,258	22.6%	3759	27.0%	17,017	23.5%
<i>Pre-school (0-4)</i>	3,098	5.3%	863	6.2%	3,961	5.5%
<i>Elementary School (5-14)</i>	6,213	10.6%	1740	12.5%	7,953	11.0%
<i>Teen (15-17)</i>	2,020	3.5%	674	4.8%	2,694	3.7%
<i>Young Adult (18-20)</i>	1,927	3.3%	482	3.5%	2,409	3.3%
Family Forming	19,118	32.6%	3,156	22.7%	22,274	30.7%
<i>Ages 21-24</i>	2,654	4.5%	749	5.4%	3,403	4.7%
<i>Ages 25-34</i>	6,680	11.4%	1,050	7.6%	7,730	10.7%
<i>Ages 35-44</i>	9,784	16.7%	1,357	9.8%	11,141	15.4%
Mature Families	17,813	30.4%	4,912	35.3%	22,725	31.3%
<i>Ages 45-54</i>	10,018	17.1%	2,864	20.6%	12,882	17.8%
<i>Ages 55-64</i>	7,795	13.3%	2,048	14.7%	9,843	13.6%
Retirement Age						
<i>Ages 65 and over</i>	8,428	14.4%	2,088	15.0%	10,516	14.5%

Figure 1 – City of Alameda Demographic Comparison: Age Groups

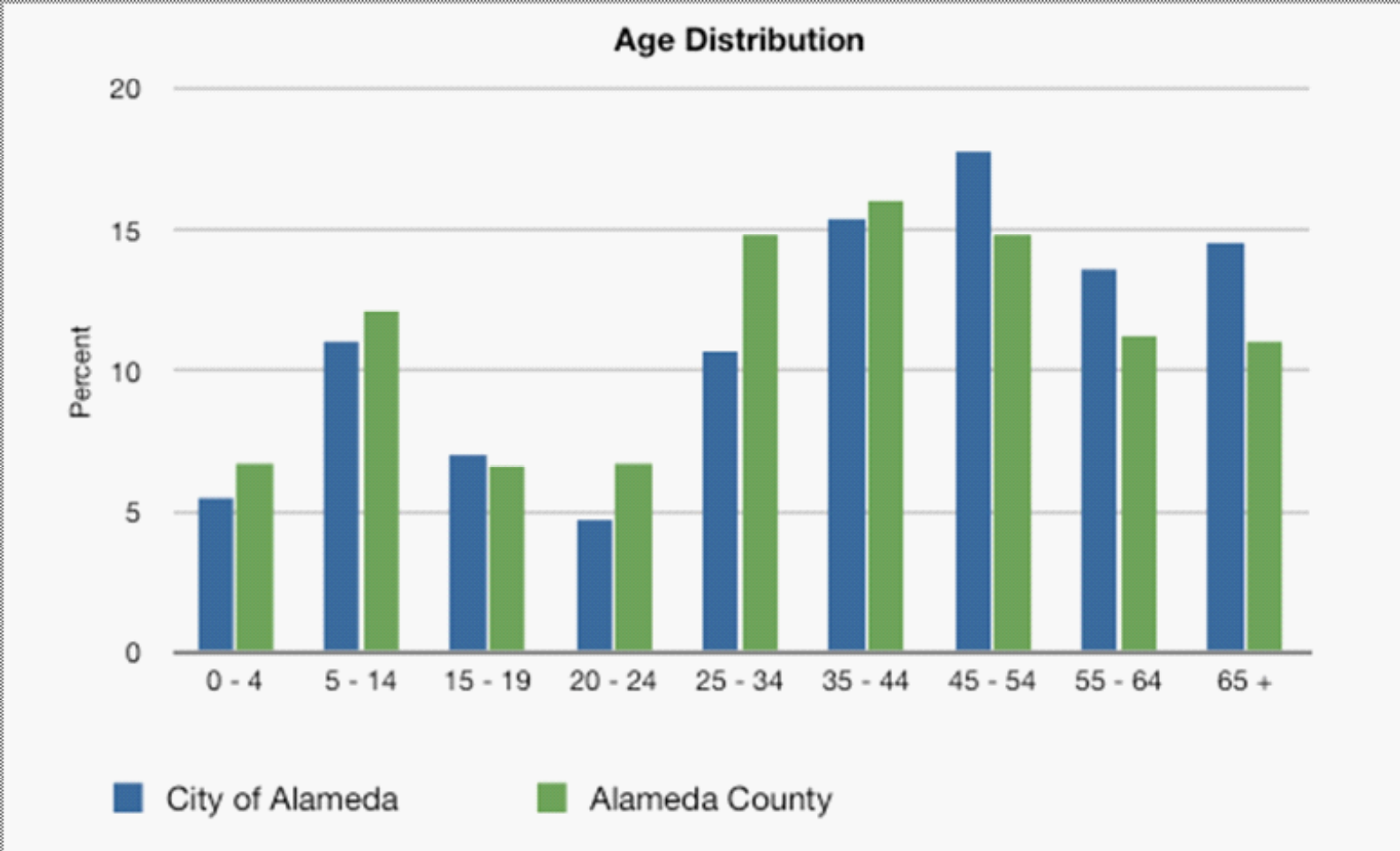


Figure 2 – Age Distribution Comparison

for the after-school, youth sport programs, and teen club programs. There will continue to be a demand for programming that targets this age group. This suggests a market and desire for after-school and summer camp programs, recreational activities for children and families, and playground features.

Senior age community members are even greater in numbers with “younger seniors” ages 55-64 years comprising 13.6% (9,843) of the population and “older seniors” 65 and older comprising 14.5% (10,515), for a combined total of 28.1% (20,358). This accounts for a growth in senior programming participation and older seniors participating in senior center activities. There is need to strategically plan how to address the demands of older, yet active, senior citizens.

Baby Boomers (born 1946 – 1964) account for the increase in the 65 and older age group, and the impact they will have on the community is significant. Boomers are unlike any generation before them. They are health conscious and active overall and will exercise, work, and live longer than any previous generation. As they age, Baby Boomers will likely have increased interest in participating in fitness activities and enrichment classes that are designed for them.

Household Composition

There are currently 29,602 households in Alameda. Of this number, 27.8 percent include children under the age of 18. Although this is 9.9% lower than the State of California (37.7%) the number of Alameda family households still indicates that there will be a high interest in activities for youth as well as activities and facilities that serve families.¹

In 2010, 4.4 percent (770) of families with children in the City of Alameda were living in poverty. This compares to 10.4 percent for the County of Alameda. Alameda residents living in poverty benefit from the subsidized programming offered by the Alameda Recreation and Parks Department.

Race/Ethnicity

Race and ethnicity play a role in the population’s parks and recreation needs and desires. Trends can be found in the ways that different races/ethnic groups use parks and recreation facilities and the types of programming they seek. The population of Alameda is culturally diverse. This diversity presents opportunities to offer a variety of parks and recreation programs that celebrate the varied interest and cultures of its residents. The population breakdown is shown in Figure 4.

1 Claritas. (2011). *Demographic Trend Report*. Retrieved April 21, 2011, from www.sitereports.com

Education

Research indicates that a person’s physical activity level is determined by a number of factors, including education, income, and gender. Approximately 74 percent (38,572) of those over age 25 who reside in Alameda have some college, an Associates, Bachelors, or Graduate degree². The population of Alameda has a higher percentage than the State of California at 59 percent. Education has been highly correlated to participation in parks and recreation activities including fitness and enrichment classes – the higher a community’s education level, the more interest there will be in parks and recreation activities³. The programming needs to keep current in order to address the changing interests of an educated population. Education can be an indicator of interest in accessible green spaces for exercise and leisure time pursuits and is reflected in the community “ownership” of the neighborhood parks system that Alameda Recreation and Parks has established.

Income

The education level is reflected in the median household income of \$71,559 with white-collar occupations at 72.4% (27,613). This is slightly higher than Alameda County, which reports a median household income of \$70,217, and higher than the median household income in California of \$58,553. This indicates that most Alameda residents have the ability to pay program fees. 34 percent (10,052) of the Alameda residents have a household income over \$100,000 indicating a greater ability to pay for recreation services. Children from higher income families are more likely to participate in many different activities including before- and after-school programs, summer camps, school extracurricular activities, and sports and recreation programs.

Travel Time to Work

The average travel time to work for an Alameda resident is approximately 30 minutes. This suggests that the community is mobile and leisure activities are pursued later in the day, after work and travel, and there is demand for after-school and summer day programming that responds to this timeframe.

2 Claritas. (2011). *Demographic Trend Report*. Retrieved April 21, 2011, from www.sitereports.com

3 American Sports Data, Inc. and the International Health, Racquet, and Sportsclub Association. (2000). *IHRSA/ASD Health Club Trend Report*. Hartsdale, NY: American Sports Data, Inc.

	Zip Code 94501 (Alameda Island)		Zip Code 94502 (Bay Farm Island)		City of Alameda (Total)	
RACE						
White Alone	29,489	50.3%	6,470	46.5%	35,959	49.6%
Black or African American Alone	4,617	7.9%	383	2.8%	5,000	6.9%
Amer. Indian and Alaska Native Alone	457	0.8%	33	0.2%	490	0.7%
Asian Alone	17,032	29.1%	6,016	43.2%	23,048	31.8%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pac. Isl. Alone	445	0.8%	42	0.3%	487	0.7%
Some Other Race Alone	2,228	3.8%	242	1.7%	2,470	3.4%
Two or More Races	4,349	7.4%	729	5.2%	5,078	7.0%
Not Hispanic or Latino						
	52,289	89.2%	13,206	94.9%	65,495	90.3%
Hispanic or Latino:						
	6,328	10.8%	709	5.1%	7,037	9.7%

Figure 3 – City of Alameda Demographics: Race & Ethnicity

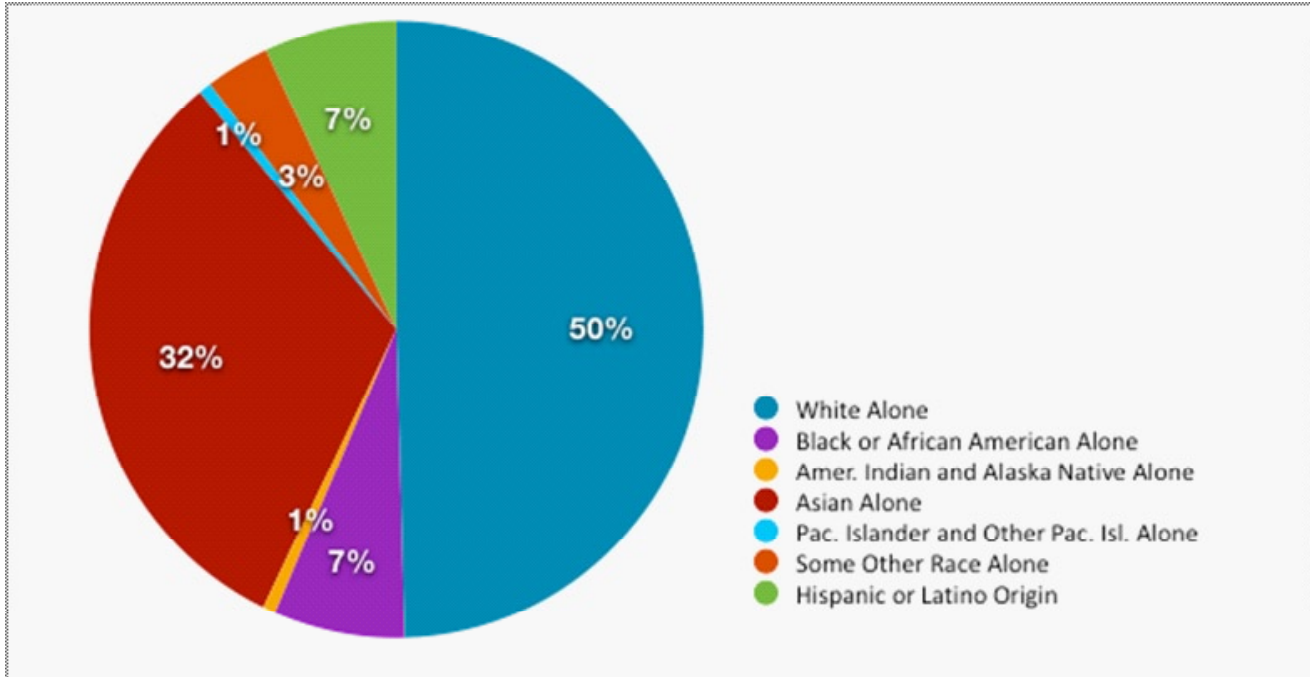


Figure 4 – City of Alameda Demographics: Race & Ethnicity

Health Benefits for Recreation

The Trust for America's Health reported that in a three year average from 2004-2006, the State of California ranked 23rd in the nation for Adult Physical Inactivity at a rate of 23.3%. Simply stated, nearly one quarter of California adults reported they did not engage in any physical activity. In June 2010, The Trust for America's Health reported that the state of California had a childhood obesity rate of 15% and a 24.4% adult obesity rate.⁴

Research has also shown that the availability of opportunities to engage in physical activity is positively correlated with the amount of physical activity in which people engage. The availability of parks and recreation services are vital to increasing physical activity across all age groups and play an essential role in reducing obesity rates. When evaluating the availability of these opportunities, an important consideration is their accessibility and proximity to residents in addition to their existence. Physical barriers, safety concerns, and distance to parks and facilities can prevent residents from using the facilities and programs. Research has found that larger sizes of parks and open spaces do not increase the frequency or intensity of use, but rather the distance to the park or open space is the greatest deterring factor. Having a park, open space or trail within a 5-minute walk (1/4 mile) is an achievable goal.

4 The Trust for America's Health, www.healthyamericans.org/reports/obesity2010/

CHAPTER 4 - COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT



COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Several methods of garnering input were used to assess community needs and determine recreation demand in the City of Alameda. This include a telephone survey, community workshops and interview with staff and key stakeholders. In June 2011, public workshops were advertised in the Alameda newspapers and on the City website, and were held at two locations. Additionally, numerous City staff members, sports and aquatics participants, service providers and park users were interviewed regarding their facilities and recreation priorities and needs. Over 500 community members provided input for this Parks Master Plan.

A - ALAMEDA COMMUNITY OPINION SURVEYS

Overview

In late 2010, four hundred (400) Alameda residents participated in a telephone survey, where they were interviewed about their park use patterns, perceptions, priorities and concerns. The survey was also advertised and maintained in on-line form on the City’s web site, to provide an opportunity for other interested residents to express their thoughts regarding the park system. The survey’s primary objectives were to explore current perceptions about Alameda’s recreation and park system, investigate the desirability of a number of proposed improvements or additions to the system, and measure the willingness of residents to support these changes. Other objectives included exploring preferences about park-related strategy options for Alameda Point, and assessing attitudes toward local activities associated with community gardening.

The surveys, including Synopsis of Results, Graphic Summary, and Text of Responses to Open-Ended Questions are included as Appendices to this Urban Greening + Parks Master Plan.

General Research Objectives

The general research objectives of the Community Opinion Survey included:

- Determine overall frequency of Alameda park system use
- Gauge perceptions about Alameda’s existing recreation and park system
- Assess the desirability of specific recreation and park improvement options
- Determine recommendations about Alameda Point
- Assess interest in activities related to community gardens
- Identify any differences related to respondent background characteristics

Methodology

A telephone survey was conducted from February 17 to March 12, 2011. The average interview took between 14-15 minutes to complete. Most interviews were conducted between the hours of 4pm and 9pm on weekdays, and 10am-5pm on weekends. Adults 18 years and older, living within the City of Alameda boundaries in either zip code 94501 or 94502, were asked to participate in the survey. A total sample of 400 interviews were completed in order to derive a statistically accurate representation of the community.

Weights were applied to the data to account for sample imbalances. With weighting, the survey’s precision was slightly reduced. The survey’s margin of error, at 95% confidence, was plus or minus 5.7%; at 90% confidence, it was plus or minus 4.8%.

In June, 2011, the city posted a follow-up Internet survey, using the 74 questions from the telephone survey. Between the 6th and 25th of June, 25 residents participated in the on-line survey. While the telephone survey sample was representative of the community, the online sample is comprised of a self-selected group. Although not a statistically valid sampling, the responses to the on-line survey provided additional insight into park users’ perceptions, concerns and priorities.

In the following summary of findings, the results of statistically valid telephone survey are discussed at length, and the results of the on-line survey are discussed in a separate paragraph at the end of each section.

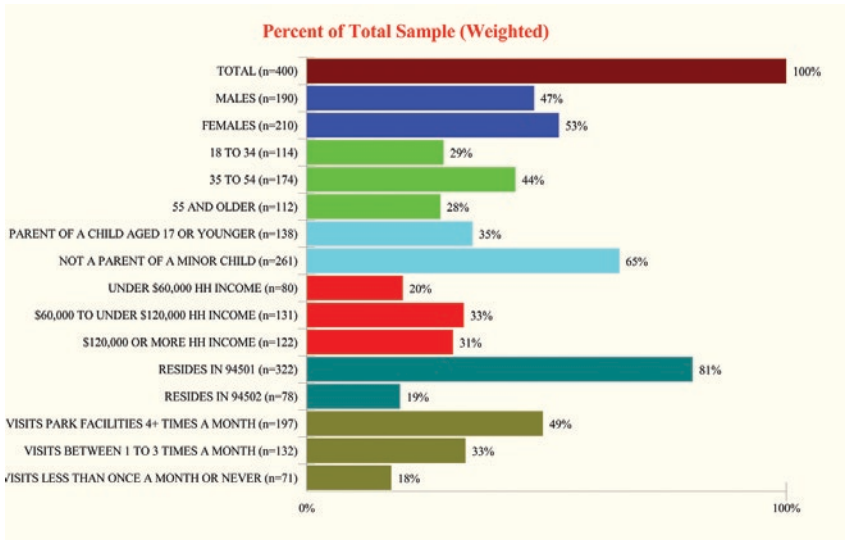


Figure 8 - Telephone Survey Sample

Summary of Findings

In general, the telephone survey indicated that perceptions about Alameda’s existing recreation and park system are favorable and the Alameda parks system (primarily its trails, nature areas, parks and playgrounds) is used frequently by a high percentage of those surveyed. Improvements related to open space emerged as the leading choice among respondents. Suggested improvement options to the park system generating the most favorable interest ratings – creating natural open space, expanding the city’s walking and jogging trail system, providing an indoor aquatic center, and creating community gardens in public parks – were also the most likely to be favored for additional funding. Additionally, slightly over half of respondents said they would recommend “high priority” be given to open space and nature areas and to a waterfront promenade and park along the Seaplane Lagoon. The respondents most drawn to open-space-related improvements tended to be frequent park users and more affluent, while those interested in recreation-based community facility improvements were more likely to be female, middle-aged, and with children. Those attracted to improvements related to competitive or team sports improvements were more likely to be younger and with children. There was general support for, and interest in, activities related to community gardens.

The respondents to the on-line survey were more likely than those in the telephone sample to be female, a parent or guardian of at least one child, and frequent park users. Their responses were similar to those of the telephone survey in terms of perceptions of the parks, with a higher emphasis on open space and trails, habitat, community gardens and fenced dog parks.

Frequency of Alameda Park System Use

Respondents were asked to identify which Alameda recreation and park facilities, from a total of 12 categories, they had visited within the last 6 months. In general, it appears that a high percentage of respondents use the Alameda park system quite frequently, and that its nature areas and open spaces - trails, shoreline, parks, picnic areas, and playgrounds receive the most use. Approximately half (49%) said they were currently visiting Alameda park facilities “four or more times a month,” while one quarter (24%) reported “two or three times a month” and 24%, a lower rate. Of the 400 respondents:

- Nearly nine in ten (87%) indicated they had recently visited Alameda’s public shoreline or other natural areas; 84%, a city park; and 79%, a city walking and jogging trail. These visiting rates were significantly higher than others.
- About half reported visiting a city playground (51%) or a city picnic area (50%). Slightly fewer (42%) had been to any of the city’s public athletic fields.
- About one in four claimed to visit a city dog park (27%), a city recreation center or senior center (26%), a city tennis court (25%), or a city basketball court (23%). Significantly fewer had visited a city pool (16%) or the Alameda Point Gymnasium (8%).

Among those averaging four or more monthly visits, 97% said they had been to the city’s public shoreline or other natural areas; 92%, to a city park; and 90%, to a city trail. Between five and six in ten had visited one of the city’s picnic areas, playgrounds, or athletic fields. Between three and four in ten had visited one of the city’s dog parks, tennis courts, or basketball courts.

Frequency of visiting varied significantly by age, parental status, and household income. On average, younger to middle-aged (18 to 34) were 1.4 times more likely than those aged 55 and older to report visiting “four or more times a month”. Parents with children aged 12 or younger were more likely than others to visit frequently, as well; among this group of 113 respondents, 58% reported visits “four or more times a month”. And, those in the most affluent income category (\$120,000 or more annually) were 1.8 times more likely than those in the least affluent one to report a high visiting frequency.

84% of on-line respondents had visited Alameda park facilities four or more times a month. 100% of those respondents had recently used Alameda’s public shoreline or other natural area, and in all other categories except tennis courts, on-line respondents also had higher rates of park use than the telephone survey respondents. This indicates that those responding to the on-line survey were mostly park system enthusiasts.

Perceptions About Alameda's Existing Recreation and Park System

Respondents were asked to describe the factors contributing to a good community park system. One in four (24%) cited the cleanliness of facilities; 18%, that they are well maintained; 18%, the presence of natural open-space; 17%, the park system's overall safety; and 14%, its accessibility. 36% of factors cited related to general attractiveness. Three in ten responses said natural open space, beach areas, or trails were attributes of a good park system; 18% cited children's areas, and another 18% cited accessibility. One in ten (11%) cited the presence of fields or courts as a factor.

Overall, perceptions about Alameda's existing recreation and park system were favorable. A total of 74% of respondents rated the existing overall quality as "much better than average" or "slightly better than average," including 38% who rated it "well above average". Asked to name, unaided, the one most desirable physical improvement to the Alameda park system, there was no consensus on any one set of recommendations – a favorable result, since no serious problem areas were identified in their set of responses (9% wanted more emphasis on landscape maintenance, 7% wanted more walking or biking trails, 7% for bathroom maintenance, 7% for additional swimming pools, 5% for more athletic fields, and 4% for more dog parks).

Asked to identify the most liked characteristic of Alameda's recreation and park system, accessibility stood out as a top characteristic, among both more frequent and less frequent park users, with 25% of respondents. 18% reported the abundance of parks; 10% its well-maintained state; 9% the variety of activities or facilities; 8%, the inclusion of natural open space; 8%, their cleanliness; 7% their family-friendliness; and 7%, their safety.

On-line survey respondents were most likely to identify the availability of natural open space, the good variety of activities and facilities, safety, family friendliness and good maintenance as what a good park system should have. They rated overall quality and safety of Alameda's parks similarly to the telephone respondents, although their perceptions about maintenance of the parks was somewhat lower than those of the overall survey sample. The highest rankings as to their most liked characteristic of Alameda's Recreation and Park system were the abundance of city parks, accessibility, availability of playgrounds, and the availability of natural open space.

Desirability of Specific Recreation and Park Improvement Options

Asked to rate their degree of interest in 15 park system improvement options, six in ten respondents reported being "very interested" in either creating natural open space or expanding the city's walking and jogging trail system. About half were "very interested" in two other options: providing an indoor aquatic center and creating community gardens in public parks.

When then asked whether they would "favor", "be neutral to", or "oppose" additional funding to support these options, the four improvements generating the highest levels of support – creating natural open space, expanding the city's trail system, providing an indoor aquatic center, and creating community gardens – were also those most likely to be favored for additional funding. The results showed a strong correlation between improvements respondents rated as "very interested" in and between those they rated they would "favor" for additional funding. In general, middle-aged respondents, parents, the more affluent, and those visiting Alameda park and recreation facilities at least four times a month all exhibited a higher propensity than others to say they would "favor" additional funding for any of the options.

Many of the improvements tended to be rated similarly by respondents. These "groupings" suggest that four motivating factors drive interest in Alameda park and recreation improvements:

- 79% of respondents were "very interested" in either natural open space, the trail system or community gardens, suggesting a common interest in open-space-related activities.
- 77% were "very interested" in at least one of five related improvements in recreation-based community facilities: an indoor aquatic center, a performing arts center, a community center, group picnic areas, or a sports complex.
- 46% were "very interested" in either baseball or softball fields, soccer fields, tennis courts, gym space, or a sports complex, indicating a motivation around competitive sports.
- Another 36% were "very interested" in either a senior center or dog parks, suggesting a common "special interests" factor.

On-line survey respondents were most likely to cite the need for more walking or bike trails. Similar to the telephone respondents, they were "very interested" in creating open space and improving the trail system, and would "favor" additional funding to support those efforts.

Recommendations About Alameda Point

Respondents were asked to judge the level of priority the city should give to five different park development strategies for Alameda Point. Strategies relating to open space and nature areas, as well as a waterfront promenade and park along the Seaplane Lagoon received the highest percentages of “High Priority” ratings, with 54% and 53% of respondents, respectively. A slightly lower percentage (46%) rated an indoor aquatic center as “high priority” and 42% also rated offering opportunities for community gardens and urban farming as “high priority”. Those with children were significantly more likely than others to react favorably to a waterfront promenade and park and an indoor aquatic center.

When respondents were asked to recommend, unaided, a single best strategy for Alameda Point, a variety of solutions were provided, and no clear consensus emerged. In total, 28% offered open-space-related recommendations (natural areas, a nature habitat, walking and hiking trails, or campgrounds), while 19% suggested some type of development.

On-line survey respondents gave a higher priority to open space and nature areas at Alameda Point, and a lower priority to an indoor aquatics center than did the telephone respondents. As to the best strategy for Alameda Point, they were most likely to suggest city park space, walking or bike trails, and nature habitat.

Interest in Activities Related to Community Gardens

There was general support for, and interest in, activities related to community gardens. Over half of the respondents (57%) reported “definite interest” in at least one of the three top-ranking garden activities asked about in the survey (actively participating in a community garden activity, working with children in a community garden, or helping decide what to plant). And, many were already engaged in some kind of garden activity; 43% said they currently grow some type of food in an at-home garden.

On-line respondents were more than twice as likely as telephone respondents to grow food in an at-home garden, and were slightly more likely to belong to a community garden. They were more likely than their telephone survey counterparts to show interest in community garden management, composting information or classes, and information on how to cook what you grow.

B - STAKEHOLDER INPUT

In addition to the community survey, stakeholders were interviewed for their input regarding community needs. Alameda Recreation and Parks Staff, including management as well as facility staff, provided detailed information as to the current demands on fields and facilities, on current program capacity, and on programs and facilities which have been requested by the community, but are not currently provided by ARPD. Interviews were also held with participants in various sports programs, including aquatics and gym users (see also Chapter 03 - Existing Conditions, Program Inventory).

Stakeholder interviews were generally in line with the conclusions of the community survey, pointing to the highest desire and need for the following elements:

- Aquatics facility, preferably indoors, with competition and recreation pools,
- A community sports complex, including 2 to 3 synthetic soccer fields for extended playability, an additional 90' diamond baseball/softball field, and a concession/rest room building,
- A community center, including a large meeting space, teen recreation center, and dedicated day care space.

Additional desires that were identified in the stakeholder interviews were:

- Expanded trail and open space systems
- Additional dog park
- Amphitheater
- BMX area
- Sand volleyball
- Bocce complex
- Soccer fields
- Fitness course

Additional interviews were conducted with participants in urban agriculture and community gardening activities, as part of the overall Urban Greening Plan. Community gardens emerged as a significant desirable use in the City’s parks, where space, sun exposure and access allow. Urban agriculture and community gardening is discussed in depth in the Alameda Urban Farm and Garden Plan that is being prepared concurrently with this Parks Master Plan.

C - COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Two community workshops were held in June 2011. They were advertised on the City web site, by email and posters, and in the local newspapers. The workshops were held at two locations in Alameda, Leydecker Park and Mastic Senior Center. The workshops began in an open house format, with interactive displays pertaining to each of Alameda's existing parks. Workshop participants were given the opportunity to record comments, observations and recommendations on any of the City's existing parks or recreation facilities. After a presentation by the consultants, workshop participants broke into groups and engaged in a visioning exercise for the programming and conceptual design of the Belt Line Park site, for programming alternatives for future parks on Alameda Point, and considering options for urban agriculture and community gardening.

The exercises pertaining to the Belt Line Park site and Alameda Point shed additional light on community priorities. There was strong interest in urban agriculture and community gardens as part of Belt Line Park as well as on Alameda Point. Generally, a mix of uses was desired at the Belt Line site, to provide for a range of recreation opportunities which could include a community center in a pastoral setting. Alameda Point is seen as more appropriate for active or intense uses such as a sports complex and aquatics center.

Workshop materials, participant comments, and examples of the results of the table exercises are included as an Appendix to this Urban Greening + Parks Master Plan Document.



CHAPTER 5 -
GOALS AND STANDARDS



DRAFT

PARK GOALS AND STANDARDS

Alameda has a well used and well loved park system. Alameda’s Recreation and Parks Department (ARPD) offers a wide array of facilities and services. A high percentage of Alameda residents are frequent park users, and most have positive perceptions of their parks. In order to continue to meet the needs of Alameda’s residents, and to maintain those positive perceptions, the City must establish clear goals and standards for their park and recreation facilities. Standards are derived national standards and comparable standards in surrounding communities. However, the standards have been evaluated and adjusted to account for the unique use patterns, needs and desires of Alameda’s residents, and the characteristics and resources of the City.

Acreage

California cities typically strive to meet acreage standards of 3 to 6 acres per 1,000 residents. Under the state’s Quimby Act, cities have the right to require new development to contribute land or funding to provide a minimum of 3 acres or parkland per 1,000 new residents. The City currently provides approximately 2 acres of park and recreation space per 1,000 residents (not including the 325+ acre Chuck Corica Golf Complex). As the population grows and Alameda is further built out, it is appropriate to set 3 acres per 1,000 residents as the City standard. As Alameda Point develops, new residential development should provide 3 acres of neighborhood park per 1,000 new residents. Aside from Alameda Point, there are limited sites available within the City for development of new parks. There have been, however, a number of sites identified that can allow the City to meet the standard of 3 acres per 1,000 total population over time.

Although at 3 acres per 1,000 residents, the overall acreage for City parks would only meet the minimum acreage established in the Quimby Act, it is more than adequate when other factors are taken into account.

- East Bay Regional Parks District (EBRPD) currently operates the 80-acre Crown Beach area along the southern shoreline of Alameda. When Alameda Point is developed, at least an additional 145 acres of open space will be provided for passive uses. This would bring the projected park acreage to almost 6 acres per 1,000 residents at the year 2030. Immediately south of the City, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Regional Shoreline provides over 700 acres of additional open

Park & Open Space Acreages	Current population: 72,500	With Alameda Point Build-out: 77,000	2030 population (projected): 80,000
Existing, per ARPD Total: 141.6 acres	1.95 AC / 1,000	1.84 AC / 1,000	1.77 AC / 1,000
Alameda Point Soccer Fields (Not including Main Street (3.5 acres) or Hornet (2 acres)) 2 nd Street: 3.5 acres Total: 145.1 acres	2.0 AC / 1,000	1.9 AC / 1,000	1.8 AC / 1,000
Planned parks Beltline: 22 acres Boatworks: 2 acres Sub-total: 24 acres Total: 169 acres	2.3 AC / 1,000	2.2 AC / 1,000	2.1 AC / 1,000
Proposed parks North Loop Road Park: 12 acres Encinal Terminal: 6 acres Mt. Trashmore: 20 acres Sub-total: 38 acres Total: 207 acres	2.9 AC / 1,000	2.7 AC / 1,000	2.6 AC / 1,000
Future Alameda Point Parks Neighborhood Parks and Community Sports Park: 30 acres Total: 237 acres	3.3 AC / 1,000	3.1 AC / 1,000	3.0 AC / 1,000

Note: Does not include future EBRPD Alameda Point Parks, or Chuck Corica Golf Complex.

Figure 9 - Park & Open Space Acreages

space available to residents. It should be noted that passive open space for hiking and walking is expressed by the community as their highest priority.

- As an island community, Alameda promotes shoreline access, providing shoreline trails wherever possible. Portions of this trail access do not fall within the park acreage calculations, although the trails serve as recreational facilities for walking, jogging, biking, and passive enjoyment. Additional trail segments, separated from vehicular traffic, are found throughout the island, further augmenting the City's recreational facilities.
- Given the distribution of Alameda's parks and the City's flat topography, virtually all of Alameda's population is within easy walking distance of a park or open space facility.

GOAL: Alameda should provide a minimum of 3 acres of neighborhood and community park per 1,000 residents.



Figure 10 - Park Locations

Access and Service Areas

Alameda’s parks are focal points and social centers of the neighborhoods. Residents tend to identify their neighborhoods by their local park. Most Alameda residents are within a five minute walk (¼ mile), of an existing or planned local park, with the exception of some portions of the East Central and East End areas. According to the 1990 General Plan, 95% of the City’s children live within 3/8 mile of a park. When trail connections are considered, an even higher proportion of the City is within easy walking range of a recreational open space.

GOAL: All Alameda residents should be within a 5-minute walk of a park, open space or trail.



Figure 11 - Parks, Trails, and Park Service Areas (1/4 mile)

Sports Fields

Alameda has an active field sports community. Multiple youth and adult leagues participate in baseball, softball, soccer and other field sports. The Sports Fields Standards Table to the right shows the number of fields operated by ARPD, as well as those fields located on Alameda Unified School District (AUSD) property, and several fields on Alameda Point. The table shows the existing ratio of fields to population, at the current population of 72,500 Alameda residents. It also shows the recommended standard for the City of Alameda based on the Community Needs Assessment, current use patterns and comparable communities' standards. "Diamond fields" include softball and baseball fields for youth and adults, including both 60' diamonds and 90' diamonds. "Rectangular fields" include both youth and adult sized fields which are used for soccer, football, rugby and/or lacrosse.

City sports fields operated by ARPD are shown on the following maps, which also indicate a 1/2 mile service area for each field. The maps illustrate that sports fields are generally well distributed throughout the City, with most residents being within 1/2 mile of a sports field.

Recommended Sports Fields Standards

Sports Facilities	Existing ARPD Fields	Alameda Point (Multi-Use Field counted with ARPD)	AUSD	Total Existing Fields	Existing Ratio (including ARPD, AUSD, Alameda Point)	Existing Ratio (including <u>only</u> ARPD fields)	Recommended Standard	RECOMMENDED SERVICE AREA
Diamond Fields	19	0	6	25	1:2,900	1:3,800	1:3,000	1/2 mile
Rectangular Fields	13	7	5	25	1:2,900	1:5,600	1:2,500	1/2 mile

Notes:

1. "Diamond Fields" includes softball and baseball, 60' & 90' diamonds.
2. "Rectangular Fields" includes both adult and youth sized fields, which may be used for soccer, football, rugby and/or lacrosse. They include fields overlaid on diamond outfields. Assume that 1 synthetic field is equivalent to 1.5 turf fields due to increased usage time.
3. Assumes current population of 72,500

Sports Fields Shortfalls

Sports Facilities	Recommended Standard	Total Fields	SHORTFALLS	Current Population 72,500	Alameda Point Build-out Population 77,000	2030 Population 80,000
Diamond Fields	1:3,000	25		1*	2	3
Rectangular Fields	1:2,500	25		4	6 + 3**	7+3**

* Diamond Field shortfall identified due to lack of 90' diamonds for adult league play.

** Assumes that 3 rectangular fields at Alameda Point (Main Street and Hornet Fields) will be removed with Alameda Point redevelopment.

The number of fields, however, is not adequate to meet the current needs of those who wish to play field sports, even when Alameda Unified School District fields are included. As the fields are generally distributed among the neighborhoods rather than being consolidated into a community sports complex, there is a lack of facilities suitable for tournament play, and families with more than one participant must drive to various locations for games. There is currently a shortfall in the number of rectangular fields, which will increase when several of the Alameda Point fields are taken off-line for development. Currently, although the overall number of diamond fields appears to be adequate, there is an identified shortage of regulation 90' baseball diamonds for adult league play. As Alameda's population increases, the shortage of fields will also increase unless new fields are built.

GOAL: Alameda should provide diamond fields at the rate of 1 field per 3,000 residents, in a range of sizes to accommodate play from Little League, to softball, to adult hardball.

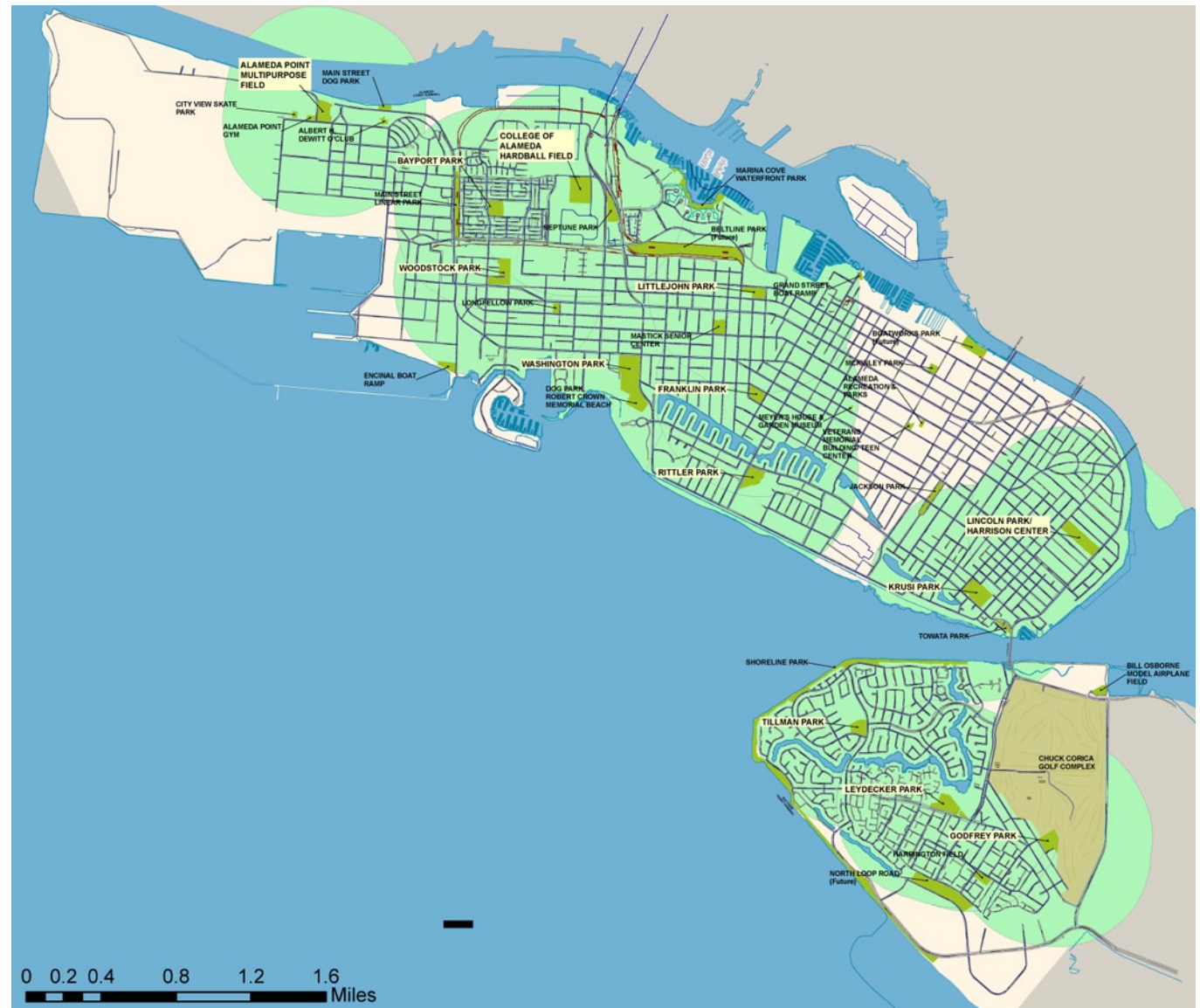


Figure 12 - Diamond Fields with 1/2 mile Service Areas

GOAL: Alameda should provide rectangular fields at the rate of 1 field per 2,500 residents, in a range of sizes to accommodate youth and adult soccer, football, rugby and lacrosse.

GOAL: Alameda should consolidate sports fields to provide a community sports facility with competitive fields and concession areas to facilitate tournament play.

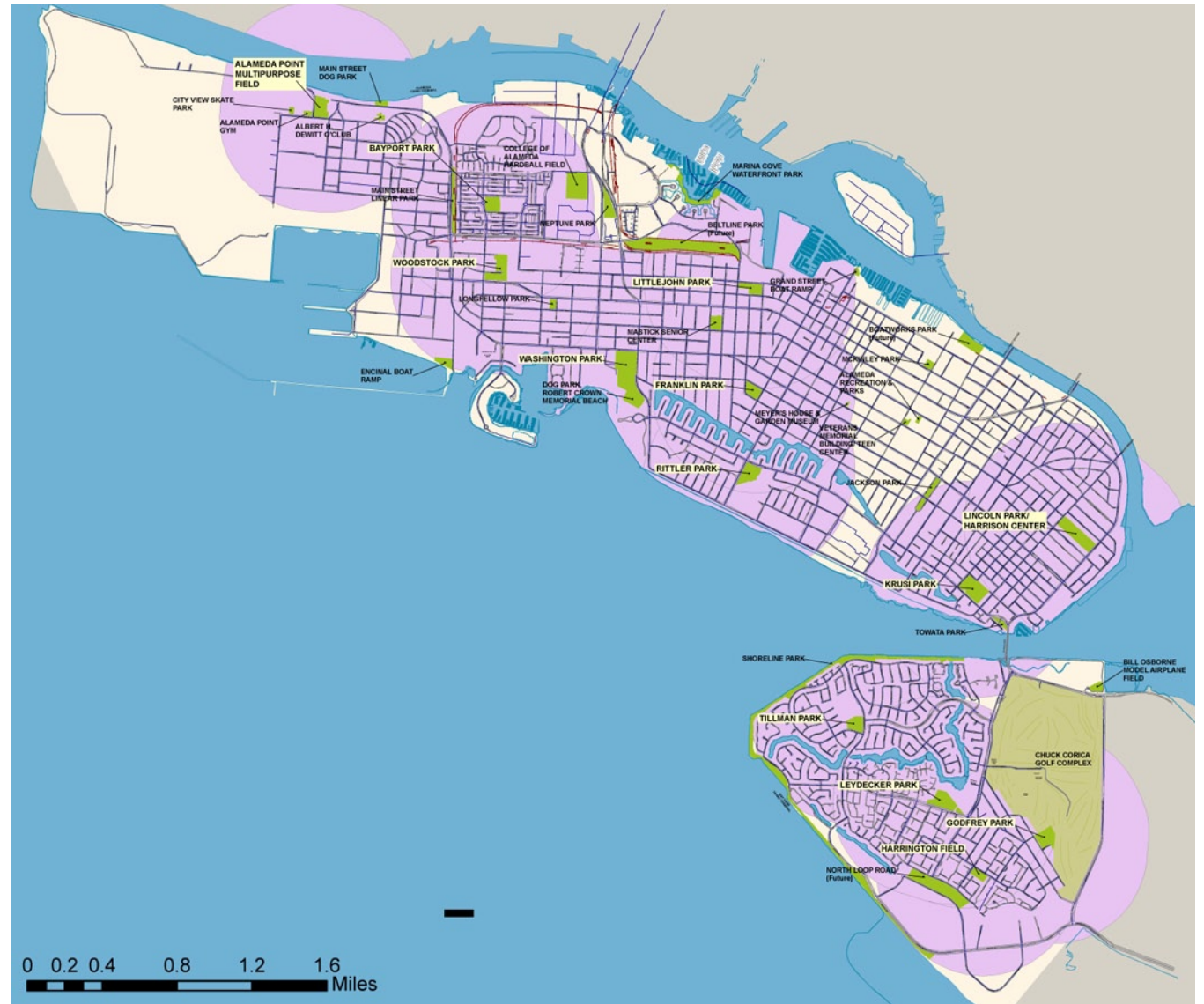


Figure 13 - Rectangular Fields with 1/2 mile Service Areas

BUILDING FACILITY GOALS AND STANDARDS

The Alameda Recreation and Parks Department (ARPD) provides programs and services to all Alameda residents from toddlers, tiny tots, youth, and teens to adults and active seniors. ARPD also has many partners in providing recreational and educational programs to the community, such as the Alameda Unified School District (AUSD) and the Boys & Girls Club.

The backbone of the City’s recreation system is its park facilities, which cultivate the character and ambiance of their respective neighborhoods in the Island City. The City’s first three recreation buildings – McKinley, Washington, and Lincoln – were built in the early 1900s. Since then ARPD has been steadily increasing both its community parks and its recreation facilities, adding new facilities approximately every 10 years through the 1980s.

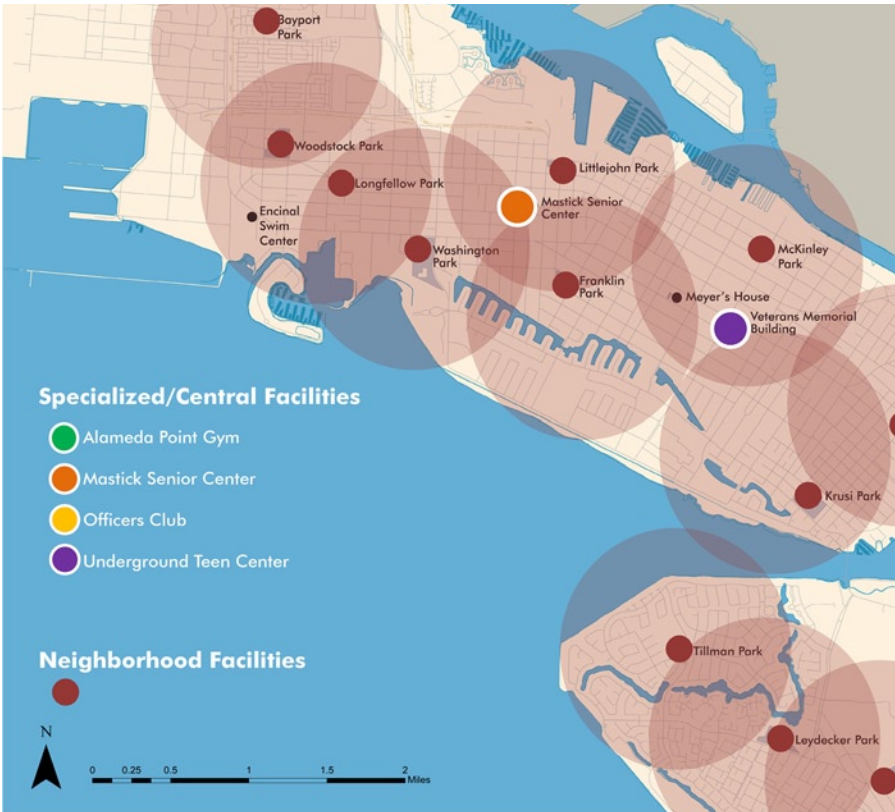


Figure 13 - Facilities Map

Facilities Assessments

ARPD’s current facilities were assessed based on documents and information provided by the City, and on ARPD staff-guided tours of each facility in the summer of 2011. The facilities not included in the assessment study included the Krusi Park building (a replacement project is underway); the Alameda Theatre; the model airplane field; the golf complex; and the City’s and School District’s aquatics facilities, which were the subject of a separate recent assessment study.

ARPD’s facilities are generally well maintained. However, many are showing their age, and in many cases are in need of refurbishment and code upgrades. There are significant opportunities to improve facilities systemwide to meet current accessibility guidelines and standards. Facilities such as the Alameda Point Gym and the Officers Club are candidates for major renovation of building envelopes and major systems.

More detailed assessment findings and recommendations for each facility are provided in the chapter on Existing Conditions.

System Analysis

The City’s current recreation service model has smaller neighborhood facilities providing recreational services to their local communities, and larger specialized facilities providing citywide services.



DRAFT

- Neighborhood facilities are a network of small buildings located in parks throughout the city. These facilities are convenient and well located within their communities. They support local community services such as preschool program, after school programs, community recreation classes, and summer youth camps. These facilities provide excellent community access due to their citywide distribution. They are only staffed when programs are being offered and can be operated independently on a per program basis.



- Specialized facilities have a citywide reach, focusing on specific client and/or program types. The Mastick Senior Center – the only ARPD facility with full time recreational staff – is centrally located and offers community-wide recreational programs. The Underground teen program at the Veterans Memorial Building operates during after-school hours. The Alameda Point Gym hosts organized league and recreational court uses.

In partnership with AUSD, the City offers aquatics programs at Encinal High School and Alameda High School. The aquatic facilities were recently assessed in a separate study, which recommended significant improvements or replacement of both. The City recently made the policy decision not to build or refurbish its own aquatics facilities, but to continue to provide aquatic programs through ongoing or new partnerships.

In the analysis of the services and facilities offered and operated by ARPD, several things became clear:

- The neighborhood facilities provide efficient and accessible space that supports preschool programs, after school programs, summer camps, localized recreation programs, and community space.



- The Mastick Senior Center provides excellent programs and services to seniors as well as a small amount of general community programming.
- The Alameda Point Gym and the Officers Club are unique links to the character and history of Alameda, but in their current condition the facilities limit recreation programming.
- The Underground Teen Center program is limited by its current location.
- There is a need for a centrally-located community center that supports citywide multi-generational recreational programming and services.



System Goals

To guide the recommendations for the master plan for facilities, the City established system goals that included:

- Maximize existing resources – where possible, reuse existing City buildings rather than build new;
- Maximize partnerships – in order to provide efficient and sustainable services, continue to leverage partnerships for both recreation programs and facilities;
- Maximize revenue – consider cost recovery opportunities, design flexibility, independent use, and opportunities for rentals and revenue generation; and
- Maximize efficiency – reduce operational duplication and provide services, programs, and facilities as efficiently as possible.

These goals helped shape and evaluate the potential facility development scenarios, and form the foundation of the recommended facility development strategy.

CHAPTER 6 - RECOMMENDATIONS

DRAFT

A decorative banner at the bottom of the page featuring a green and blue color scheme. It includes silhouettes of trees on the left, a person playing a guitar, a baseball bat, a person running, and a person playing a tennis racket. The word "DRAFT" is written in red, bold, italicized capital letters across the center of the banner.

A - PARKS RECOMMENDATIONS

1 - Preserve and Enhance Existing Parks and Facilities

Alameda is well served by its network of neighborhood parks. Maintenance, upkeep and improvements over time are essential for a preserving infrastructure, and for continuing to provide functional, inviting and attractive parks.

- Assign high priority to maintenance and renovation of existing parks, as described in the Existing Conditions Chapter recommendations.
- Monitor existing parks on a regular basis and identify those sites that require repair, renovation and/or improvements.

2 - Develop Additional Park Acreage

Because Alameda is largely built out, opportunities to create additional parks are limited. A number of sites have been identified that can be developed as City parks. If all of the following sites are developed, over time, the City can meet the goal of 3 acres per 1,000 residents.

- Develop proposed park sites to increase the City's park acreage.
 - Beltline Park - This 22-acre site is centrally located, and large enough to accommodate both active and passive recreation, urban agriculture and/or community gardens, and a recreation facility such as a community center.
 - Boatworks Park - This 2-acre site at the Estuary shoreline between Oak and Elm Streets has been entitled as part of an adjacent residential development. It will accommodate mostly passive uses, but will also include water access for non-motorized water craft.
- Monitor opportunities to develop potential park sites to increase the City's park acreage.
 - North Loop Road Park - This 12-acre site on Bay Farm Island could be developed for active or passive uses, and is large enough to accommodate several sports fields.
 - Encinal Terminal - This mixed use development will include public park land, and provide public access to the Estuary Shoreline around the perimeter of the site.

Mt. Trashmore - This 20-acre former garbage/landfill site at the Estuary Shoreline on Bay Farm Island could be developed for passive uses and habitat. Park development is constrained by the issues associated with the site's prior use, including the ongoing risk of methane leaks and ground settlement, however, a number of similar sites around the bay have been successfully converted to passive use parks.

Former Coast Guard Housing Park Site - This site along Mitchell Avenue was at one time used for active sports, and could be redeveloped for such use.

- Future Alameda Point Parks

Alameda Point - The largest developable land area in the City, Alameda Point is the most suitable location for large passive parks and for active sports. As the residential component of Alameda Point develops, it is recommended that the City require 3 acres of neighborhood park for each 1,000 new residents. Alameda Point is also anticipated to be the location for passive parks operated by East Bay Regional Park District.

- As infill and new development occurs, explore opportunities to collaborate with private developers to create pocket parks and neighborhood parks in association with those developments.
- Continue to enhance partnerships with East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD), and the California Department of Parks and Recreation (the State Park system) to develop and manage parks, enhance access to parks and open space, and to acquire additional parkland. This is particularly appropriate given the high interest expressed in the Community Surveys in open space for hiking and walking.
- As new park acreage is developed, allocate funds to increase the ARPD's maintenance budget commensurate with the increased maintenance needs.

3 - Improve Access for All Residents

Alameda has well distributed parks, and a network of trails, particularly along the water. Although most residents are within ¼ mile of a park, and 95% of the City's children live within 3/8 mile of a park, residents of some areas, particularly the East End and East Central areas, are farther removed from park facilities.

- Develop identified park sites in areas that are currently underserved (e.g. Boatworks Park, Beltline Park)
- Improve and expand the City’s trail system to provide recreational opportunities and improve access to parks and shoreline.
- Expand access to Alameda’s shoreline wherever feasible.
- Where separated trails are not feasible, improve on-street connections to be pedestrian and bicycle-friendly green streets.
- Continue to upgrade existing parks to ADA standards to ensure accessibility for all.

4 - Provide Additional Sports Fields

As Alameda’s population grows, its current shortage of sports fields will be increased. By the year 2030, the projected population of 80,000 will result in the need for 3 more diamond fields than exist currently, and 10 more rectangular fields. There is also a need to develop and cluster competitive field uses in order to accommodate tournaments. Additionally, the year round need to keep sports fields in use and the need to control maintenance costs would be best addressed with the development of competitive synthetic turf fields.

A comparison of current population and facilities to industry standards reveals an immediate shortfall of one full-size baseball/softball field (90’ baselines) and four rectangular multi-use turf areas to accommodate soccer, football, rugby, and lacrosse. This deficiency is projected to increase to an additional two full-sized ball fields and six rectangular multi-use fields with the anticipated build out of Alameda Point. Based on review of current conditions, it is recommended to construct two to three all-weather fields immediately as well as one full-size baseball field to begin addressing the shortfalls.

As described below, the identified potential park sites could provide sufficient space to meet these needs.

Potential Sites for Sports Fields

- Beltline Park - This site is already owned by the City, in a central location, and linked to the future Beltline Spur Trail. There is easy access from perimeter roads, although there is limited visibility of the total site from the perimeter

roads. Parking must be accommodated on site. There is a need to buffer the established residential community from park use impacts. The linear shape of the site limits sports field configurations. The site will likely require soils remediation, which impacts cost and timing of development.

North Loop Road Park – The property is not currently owned by the City. There is convenient access for Bay Farm Island residents, with easy access from North Loop Road, which could also accommodate off-site parking. There is good visibility along the length of the site from perimeter roads. There is a need to buffer the established residential community from sports impacts. The existing Kindercare facility divides the park site, and the linear shape of the site limits sports field configurations.

- Encinal Terminal – This site is not owned by the City. The ability to accommodate fields and the schedule of construction will be subject to the mixed use development’s timing and approvals.
- Former Coast Guard Housing Site – This property is not owned by the City. It has historically been used for active field sports. There is easy access and good visibility from the perimeter roads. It is readily accessible to residents of the western end of the island. It will not be contiguous with the developed Alameda community until redevelopment occurs.
- Alameda Point Neighborhood Parks – The City controls the property and planning process contingent on redevelopment of Alameda Point. Neighborhood parks in the redeveloped area are more likely to be used by local residents than by the overall Alameda community.
- Alameda Point Community Sports Park – The City controls the property and planning process. The site would be more accessible to residents on the western end of the island, and would not be contiguous with the developed Alameda community until redevelopment occurs. This is the only currently identified site large enough for a regulation 90’ diamond ballfield. There is the opportunity to locate new fields in conjunction with the existing fields and Gym at Alameda Point, or to create partnerships with private development to build and operate facilities. Construction of fields would be subject to timing of redevelopment of Alameda Point.

Potential Field Capacity

Potential Site	Diamond Fields	Rectangular Fields
Beltline Park	1-2 Little League	2-3 youth fields
North Loop Road	3 Little League	3-4 fields
Encinal Terminal		1 field
Former Coast Guard Housing Site	1 – 60’ diamond	3 fields
Alameda Point Neighborhood Parks	2 Little League	2 youth fields
Alameda Point Community Sports Park	1-2 90’ diamond	1-2 competition fields

Sports Field Distribution Options

		Beltline Park	North Loop Road	Encinal Terminal	Coast Guard Housing Site	Alameda Point Neighborhood Parks	Alameda Point Community Sports Park
Option 1 Consolidate 1 complex	Rectangular Fields	1		1	3	2	3
	Diamond Fields				1	1	1
Option 2 Develop 2 complexes	Rectangular Fields	1	4		2	1	2
	Diamond Fields				1		2
Option 3 Distribute fields	Rectangular Fields	2	4		2		2
	Diamond Fields	1			1		1

Develop sports field facilities to meet the standard of 1 diamond field per 3,000 residents and 1 rectangular field per 2,500 residents.

- **Option 1** – Consolidate the majority of new sports uses into one sports complex
- **Option 2** – Develop majority of sports uses on both eastern and western ends of the community
- **Option 3** – Distribute sports uses on three sites throughout the community.

OPTION 1



OPTION 2



OPTION 3



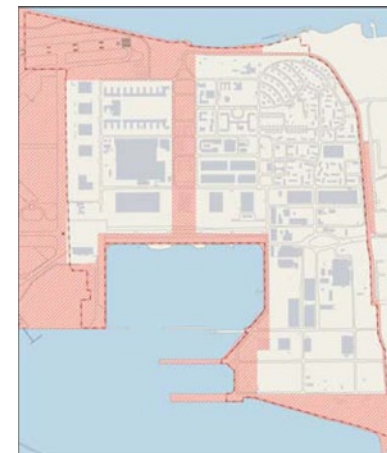
DRAFT

	Option 1 Consolidation at Alameda Point/Coast Guard Housing	Option 2 East-West Distribution – Loop Road & Alameda Point/Coast Guard Housing	Option 3 Distribution – Loop Road, Beltline & Alameda Point
<i>Distribution</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concentrates facilities at west end of island Most underserved areas are on eastern Alameda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distributes facilities to both ends of Alameda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distributes facilities throughout Alameda, although does not address gap in service areas
<i>Costs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economy of scale – avoid duplication of concessions/restrooms. Possible partnerships with Bladium or Big League Dreams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duplication of concessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs and construction can be spread over time Duplication of concessions & restrooms
<i>Timing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timing on sports complex unclear pending Alameda Point development plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loop Road Park may be constructed on accelerated timeline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beltline Park may need significant remediation - delays construction
<i>Operations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieves maintenance efficiencies 		
<i>Other</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Space is available Possible synergy with existing Alameda Point Multipurpose Field Accommodate tournaments Public support for sports complex Traffic impacts if tournament use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loop Road could satisfy soccer needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible conflict with transit corridor @ Beltline Neighborhood challenges @ Beltline Possible circulation issues @ Beltline

5 - Provide additional passive open space, habitat areas, trails and shoreline access.

Access to natural open space and trails is the highest priority for Alameda residents. The City has already established a successful partnership with EBRPD and with the management of Crown Beach and the Shoreline Trail. The redevelopment of Alameda Point provides significant potential to provide enhanced habitat areas and increased open space. Much of the Northwest Territories’ 700 acres will be protected as habitat area. Restrictions placed on Tidelands Trust land will secure these areas for open space, park and waterfront related uses.

- Continue to enhance partnerships with the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD), and the California Department of Parks and Recreation (the State Park system) to develop and manage parks, enhance access to parks and open space, and to acquire additional parkland.
- Continue to implement recommendations for the Cross Alameda Trail, and the City of Alameda Pedestrian Plan.
- Incorporate shoreline trails along the perimeter of Alameda Point and Coast Guard property as part of the redevelopment planning effort.
- Continue efforts to implement a waterfront trail between Sweeny Bridge and Grand Marina.
- Incorporate open space and habitat access into the redevelopment planning efforts for Alameda Point.

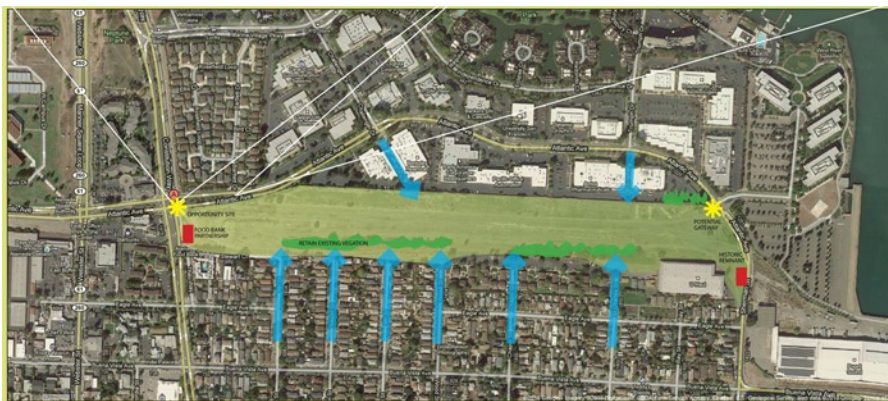


Tidelands Trust

6 – Develop Beltline Park as a community park to meet the needs of a cross-section of the community

The acquisition of the former “Beltline” Railroad property provides the City with the opportunity to develop a centrally located community park. At 22 acres, the site is significantly larger than other community parks in Alameda. The site is prominently located at the intersection of Constitution Way and Atlantic Avenue. Currently, views into the site are obstructed by vegetation. However, there is an opportunity for visual access into the park. The parcel has a long linear configuration.

Office buildings and associated parking lots form the northern boundary of the site. The southern boundary abuts an established residential community. The Food Bank Partnership is located at the western edge of the parcel. Auto access to the site would be limited to short segments on Atlantic Avenue at the western and eastern ends of the site. Auto access through adjacent neighborhoods should be discouraged. The proposed Cross Alameda Trail Corridor will cross the site and provide bike and pedestrian links to the community. An 85’ corridor will need to be retained across the site to accommodate the trail and potential transit. The former Railroad property contains deteriorated infrastructure, including railroad tracks and accessories, and likely requires environmental remediation which will present challenges to park and urban farm use.



Beltline Park

Three potential options are beginning to emerge with regard to the development of the Alameda Beltline property. They all include community garden areas (also ranked high by the public) and a number of potential variations of athletic fields and community center building configurations.

Through workshops and discussion with stakeholders for following guiding principles emerged:

- The western edge of the property should be developed for urban farming in partnership with the Food Bank. A community/demonstration garden might be developed at the east end of the parcel in conjunction with the community center.
- Residential areas should be buffered from active park uses. Local pedestrian access points should connect the park with neighborhoods.
- Access and parking areas should be developed at each end of the park with a looped pedestrian network linking the two ends.
- To “activate” such a large linear park it is important to provide a variety of uses of facilities that appeal to a cross-section of the community.
- The park should not be dominated by sports uses. It should provide family-oriented active and passive uses.
- Sustainable concepts should be seamlessly integrated and celebrated in the design.

7 - Pursue Partnering Options for Providing Additional Facilities and Programs

With shrinking budgets and increasing demands, one effective means of providing additional parks, open space, facilities and programs is through partnerships with other public entities and private organizations. Alameda has several successful examples of this approach, including partnerships with East Bay Regional Parks District, and with the Boys & Girls Club. Partnerships can allow the City to provide more services at a lower cost.

- Continue to partner with East Bay Regional Parks District for operation of large open space parks such as Crown Beach. Explore additional partnership opportunities with EBRPD at Alameda Point, and Mt. Trashmore.
- Coordinate with non-profit organizations such as the Boys & Girls Club to provide complementary services and facilities.

- Consider expansion of private sector partnerships such as Bladium Sports Club or Miracle League to fill unmet community needs.
- Seek opportunities for public/private partnerships, and partnering with non-profits, community or sports groups for specific improvements to existing facilities.
- Develop agreements with ball field leagues to self-maintain infields to allow maintenance staff to focus on other areas of the parks.

8 -Ensure Ongoing Funding of Park Maintenance and Maximize Maintenance Efficiencies

In order to continue to provide the excellent quality of parks that the residents of Alameda currently enjoy, ongoing maintenance must be of the highest priority. Whether considering existing parks and facilities, expanding or improving existing facilities, or adding new parks and facilities, ensuring funding for maintenance is essential.

Basic maintenance costs include personnel costs for tasks such as mowing turf, pruning trees and shrubs, weeding, upkeep of irrigation systems and site furnishings, trash collection, sweeping and graffiti removal. They also include water and electricity charges. Some specialized park elements, such as restrooms, large group picnic areas, sports fields or dog parks, have greater maintenance requirements. Routine replacement of park elements such as play structures, court surfacing, field turf, landscaping and irrigation, benches, etc. (life-cycle costs) must be included in ongoing maintenance projections. A cost matrix is included in the Appendices to this Urban Greening + Parks Master Plan, which lists projected maintenance costs for various elements of the park system. Careful tracking of discrete elements of operations and maintenance may also reveal areas for specific cost savings (e.g. irrigation upgrades which result in lower water usage; new lighting technology which uses less energy and requires less frequent maintenance).

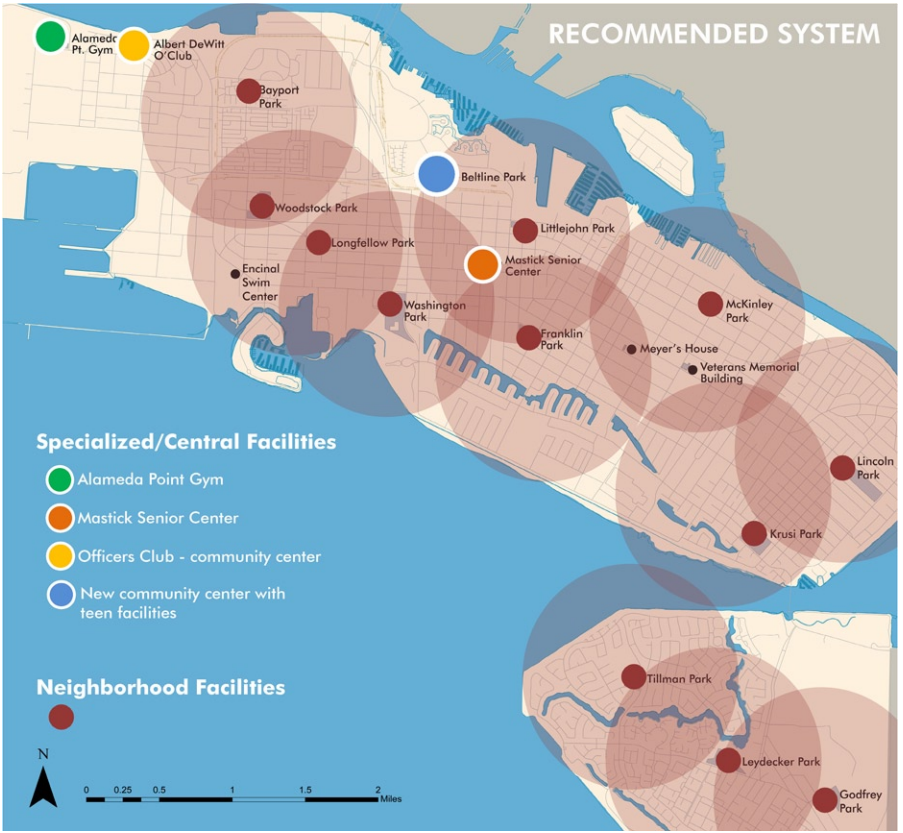
- Identify funding sources for ongoing maintenance of any new park or facility to be added to the existing parks system, prior to acquisition.
- Consider forming Citywide or local Landscape and Lighting Districts to provide an ongoing funding stream for park maintenance and operations.
- Consider developing a segregated capital reinvestment fund within the City's General Fund to support life-cycle replacement of existing park amenities.

- Maintain a segregated account for use fees, concession charges, and other fees generated from the parks, for reinvestment in maintenance of the parks.
- Track operations and maintenance expenditures to determine annual costs of discrete elements such as irrigation and graffiti abatement.
- Seek opportunities for grant funding, public/private partnerships, and partnering with non-profits, community or sports groups for specific improvements.
- Seek out and encourage the provision of volunteer assistance and stewardship from civic organizations, special interest groups, and individuals to reinforce a sense of park ownership by community.
- Maximize maintenance efficiencies where possible, including:
 - Encourage use of preferred equipment
 - Use primarily turf and mulch as park ground plane, avoiding large areas of groundcover and shrub planting. Explore opportunities to transition lawn under mature trees to non-irrigated mulch areas.
 - Avoid location of sand pits in play areas near safety surfacing - sand pits should be surrounded by concrete to facilitate sweeping.
 - Use fiberglass or concrete light poles, which resist corrosion from the marine environment.
 - Use asphalt for pathway surfacing.
 - Use concrete for park signs.

B - BUILDING FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

Neighborhood Facilities

The City’s neighborhood park facilities are very efficient to operate, well used, and highly valued by the community. The City should continue to operate and maintain this network of facilities. Based on their age, it is likely that some of the facilities are out of compliance with current seismic, energy, and accessibility standards and codes; further analysis would be required to identify and prioritize specific code upgrades that may be required. The City should continue addressing both deferred and ongoing maintenance projects at these facilities.



Specialized Facilities

The Mastick Senior Center is successful at serving community members from throughout the city. The City should continue to maintain this facility as a center for senior programs and services in Alameda. Although many improvements have been made, the facility’s age suggests that it is likely out of compliance with current seismic, energy, and accessibility standards and codes. The City may also wish to conduct further analysis in order to identify potential strategies for improving space utilization or increasing capacity.



The City should provide improved facilities for youth programs. Although the Veterans Memorial Building has a central location in the community, the building’s age suggests that significant upgrades may be needed in order to comply with modern codes and standards for building systems, seismic performance, energy efficiency, and accessibility. Upgrading the building would likely prove less cost-effective than re-locating the youth program to an alternative site. Co-locating the youth program with other centralized recreation facilities would provide opportunities to enhance youth programming and improve operational efficiency.



The Alameda Point Gym is a valuable resource for city recreation programs and should be retained. Programs would benefit from modernized courts, bleachers, and support facilities. The building should be upgraded to meet current codes and standards for seismic performance, building systems, energy efficiency, and accessibility.



The City should develop a central community center facility to support larger-scale citywide recreation needs, such as including large program/event space, classrooms, and arts and crafts facilities. Incorporating the teen center and additional preschool programs could improve operational efficiency and expand revenue generating opportunities.

Facility Development Scenarios

A number of sites and facility strategies were potentially available to improve citywide recreation, community center, and youth programming. In order to evaluate the possible combinations of facilities and sites, four facility development scenarios were identified that generally emphasized each of the system goals. These included:

- These included:

 - Maximizing existing resources. This scenario seeks to maximize the use of the City's existing facilities and infrastructure rather than building new. Elements of this scenario included renovation of the Alameda Point Gym for active recreation; renovation of the Alameda Point Pool for aquatics programs; renovation and adaptive reuse of the Officers Club for a community center; and renovation of the Veterans Memorial Building to improve space for youth programs.
- Maximizing partnerships. This scenario seeks to minimize the City's investment in capital projects through partnerships with other service providers. It assumes that the City would continue to provide aquatics facilities through an existing or new partner. It also assumes that the City would develop a partnership for active recreation/sports facilities (e.g., court sports). Under this scenario, the Alameda Point Gym/Pool would no longer be used by ARPD for recreation programming.
- Maximizing revenue generation. This scenario seeks to develop facilities that support the generation of revenue to offset operations and/or capital costs. It develops a new community center at the Beltline site with large event hall, active recreation spaces (e.g., gymnasium), preschool facilities, and a teen center; the inclusion of an aquatic program could further increase the City's ability to develop revenue through the sale of annual passes. The Officers Club is renovated to increase its rentability as an event venue. Under this scenario, the Alameda Point Gym, Alameda Point Pool, and Veterans Memorial Building are not used for Recreation & Park programming and are available either for other city/community uses or as surplus property.
- Maximizing efficiency. This scenario seeks to create facilities that minimize operational costs (staffing, energy use, and maintenance) through consolidated facilities with logical floor plans, excellent sightlines and adjacencies, and highly efficient building materials and systems. This scenario adds a new community center (possibly at the Beltline site) with large event hall, active recreation spaces (e.g., gymnasium), preschool facilities, and a teen center; an aquatics program could be added as well. The Alameda Point Gym, Alameda Point Pool, Officers Club, and Veterans Memorial Building are not used for Recreation & Park programming and are available either for other city/community uses or as surplus property.



The Summary Table below describes each of the scenarios and their associated advantages and disadvantages.

Summary of scenarios

	Scenario: Maximize Existing Resources	Scenario: Maximize Partnerships	Scenario: Maximize Revenue	Scenario: Maximize Operational Efficiency
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use existing buildings • No new construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop active recreation and aquatics programs through partnership with public/private entities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop facilities with sufficient program range and capacity to support annual pass sales • Develop facilities that support revenue generation programs such as rentals and preschool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce number of facilities to operate and maintain • Buildings are highly energy efficient • Buildings can be staffed/operated efficiently
Scenario Components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renovate Alameda Point Gym • Renovate Alameda Point Pool • Renovate/adaptive reuse of Officers Club for community center • Renovate Veterans Memorial Building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renovate/adaptive reuse of Officers Club for community center • Aquatics and active recreation/ gym facilities provided by partner • Renovate Veterans Memorial Building for teen program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New community center with active recreation (aquatics, gym), preschool, youth center, and large event hall with kitchen. • Renovate/adaptive reuse of Officers Club to maximize rentals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New community center with active recreation (aquatics, gym), preschool, youth center, and large event hall with catering kitchen.
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds on existing resources and infrastructure • Largest amount of square footage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potentially least capital cost scenario • Alameda Point Gym and Pool become surplus assets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beltline site is a reasonably central location in the community for programs and services • Vets Memorial Building and Alameda Point Gym and Pool become surplus assets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beltline site is a reasonably central location in the community for programs and services • Vets Memorial Building, Officers Club, and Alameda Point Gym and Pool become surplus assets
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potentially highest capital cost scenario • Alameda Point not perceived as a central location within the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City access to recreation and aquatics facilities subject to negotiation/ cooperation with partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alameda Point Gym has unique historical value and space that a new facility most likely will not match. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alameda Point Gym and the Officers Club have unique historical value and space that new facilities most likely will not match.

Recommended Option

Based on analysis and evaluation of each of the scenarios, the City developed a hybrid preferred option that includes the following:

- Renovate the Alameda Point Gym at its current size of approximately 35,000 square feet to improve support for citywide and regional sports programming. The renovation program would include improved courts, bleachers, and support spaces. The site of the adjacent pool building would be repurposed. Building renovation would cost approximately \$20-22 million, with an additional \$8-9 million allowance for parking and landscape renovation.
- Renovate the Officers Club at its current size of approximately 32,000 square feet to develop large program/event space for community use and rentals. Depending on the renovation program, the City may be able to develop a partnership with a third-party service provider to operate either a portion of the facility (such as a bar/restaurant) or the entire facility (such as a conference/meeting venue). Building renovation would cost approximately \$15-16 million, with an additional \$1-2 million allowance for parking and landscape renovation.
- Develop a new community center of approximately 35,000-40,000 square feet in an accessible central location in the city. Significant program elements include a small gymnasium, teen center, large program/event space, and preschool programs. The Beltline site has the capacity to accommodate a facility of this size and would be an appropriately central location. The approximate building cost would be \$22-27 million (assuming a single story building and, not including land costs), with an additional allowance of \$3-4 million for parking and landscaping.



- Develop aquatics programs for teaching, competition/fitness, and recreational swimming through partnerships, with facilities provided by a public or private aquatics service provider.
- Discontinue the use of the Veterans Memorial Building for City-provided recreation programming.
- Continue to operate and maintain the Mastick Senior Center.
- Continue to operate, maintain, and refurbish (as feasible) the neighborhood facilities throughout the city.

Project Priorities and Phasing

Because specific funding strategies have not yet been identified for these recommended projects, phasing priorities were not developed as part of this master plan. As such, the recommended projects will be implemented based on opportunity, when funding and/or partnerships for specific projects arise. The City may wish to evaluate other phasing strategies, such as prioritizing projects that fulfill specific community needs (e.g., for community event space); projects that will boost revenue generation (e.g., additional preschool capacity); or those that create surplus assets (e.g., moving the youth program out of the Veterans Memorial Building).

Budget Development

As the size and scope of each project is refined, detailed budgets can be developed to help the City plan funding strategies. Budgets should be as comprehensive as possible, including site acquisition, site and building construction, furniture, technology, equipment, signage/graphics, and public art as appropriate, as well as design fees and other soft costs, contingencies, escalation, fees, moving expenses, and temporary facilities (as needed).

C - FUNDING SOURCES

There are many options for funding the recommended capital projects. A key component of the master plan is the concept of partnerships, an approach that applies to the funding and implementation of capital projects as well as to providing services to the community. Partnerships with public and private entities are an excellent way to leverage funds to meet multiple needs efficiently, and more and more public facilities in California are sharing resources to meet common goals. This section describes some of the more common strategies that public agencies use to develop facilities, in addition to partnerships.

City Funds

General funds and reserve funds are a potential source of funding. Available general revenue funds are often used for small projects. Larger projects usually require funds to be set aside annually into a reserve account for a capital program.

General Obligation Bonds

Since the passage of Proposition 46 in 1986, cities have been able to issue general obligation bonds to acquire, construct, or improve real property. General obligation bonds are the most efficient form of long-term debt financing because they require neither a reserve fund nor funded interest (i.e. capitalized interest) during construction or acquisition of the project. Therefore, general obligation bonds are smaller in size and annual total debt is correspondingly lower than for any other form of long-term debt financing. The major challenge of a general obligation bond is that they require passage by a super-majority (two-thirds) of voters.

Redevelopment Funds

State of California Redevelopment law has allowed a redevelopment agency to obtain funds using “tax increment financing.” This type of financing registered a total property tax value for the area and then allowed any future increases in taxes (the “tax increment”) due to increases in the assessed value of properties within the area to go to the redevelopment agency for use in stimulating development. The purpose of these redevelopment areas was to fund new projects that would create a healthier environment for businesses and residents. The redevelopment agency could then use the funds raised through the tax increment to rehabilitate

properties, promote creation of jobs, improve streets and streetscapes, parks, and other public facilities, stimulate private business and development, and create investment to accomplish what could not be done by other public or private means. Limitations on the types of projects that could be built using redevelopment funds, included a requirement that projects be located within an official redevelopment district.

The status of the California Redevelopment law is uncertain until a pending lawsuit is resolved, which is anticipated to occur in January 2012.

Development Impact Fees

Development impact fees are levied by cities and/or counties on new residential and commercial construction in order to pay for the additional infrastructure that will be required to support the new population and uses. Fees are determined by each jurisdiction, typically based on the number of units to be developed, the timing of the build-out of those units, and the anticipated amount of money needed to pay for the required infrastructure improvements.

A portion of these fees is often earmarked for improvements to public facilities. Often called Public Facilities Fees (PFFs) or Community Facilities Fees (CFFs), these fees can be used for a variety of projects, including community/recreation facilities. One limitation on PFFs/CFFs is that these funds cannot be used for improvements that predate the developments upon which they are levied; in other words, local jurisdictions cannot ask developers to pay for pre-existing capital/infrastructure deficits. For this reason, it is important for jurisdictions to be proactive in setting and levying PFFs/CFFs early, so that sufficient funding can be accrued to pay for projects.

Grants

Federal and state grants are available from time to time. For example, in 2006, California voters passed the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006 (aka Proposition 84), which made \$386 million in grants available for park and recreation capital improvements. In 2009, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act was passed, a highly competitive grant program for public projects. Grant programs such as these often give priority to projects that clearly address a well-defined need, and that use a highly participatory needs assessment and design process.

This master plan will be an important document to help describe the need for facility improvements in a grant application. The City can also maximize its competitiveness for grant programs by continuing to engage the community in the dialogue about park and recreation needs.

Mello-Roos Special Tax Bonds

The Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act was enacted by the California Legislature in 1982 to provide all cities, counties, or districts with an alternative method of financing essential public facilities and services. The Act allows cities to create separate public agencies, known as community facilities districts, within their boundaries for the purpose of financing certain public facilities and services. The Mello-Roos financing mechanism uses a special tax to repay the annual debt service and operating costs. The special tax may be based upon benefit to the parcels of land in the district, or on the cost of making the facilities or services available, or on any other reasonable basis. The tax must not be ad valorem or related to the value of the property.

Benefit Assessment Districts

A benefit assessment district taxes property owners in a special district created to provide benefits for those in the district. California Proposition 218, passed in 1996, prohibits the creation of Benefit Assessment Districts based on property values. Rather, parcels in the district are assessed based on the benefit they receive, potentially based on parcel use (commercial, residential, etc.). Such a measure requires simple majority support (50% + 1) to pass, and votes are weighted based on each property owner's proposed assessment.

Sales Taxes

A special purpose sales tax could be levied on top of existing local sales taxes. As with general obligation (GO) bonds, special purpose sales taxes require a two-thirds majority vote. However, sales tax revenue can be used for both operations and capital projects, whereas only capital projects can be funded through GO bonds. Available revenue through a special sales tax can be harder to predict than with GO bonds, as it is dependent on actual sales.

Certificates of Participation

Certificates of participation are a subset of the general financing technique known as lease/purchase or installment sale obligation financing. Within the tax-exempt realm a lease/purchase allows a municipality, in consideration for the use of equipment and/or real property, to make lease payments over a specified period of time. At the conclusion of this contract, the lessee (municipality) has the right to purchase the leased capital items at a nominal amount (usually \$1), or ownership may have already transferred by way of an installment sale contract. If the financing is structured to meet the requirements established by the federal government, the lease payments to the lessor are exempt from federal and state income taxation. The lessor, therefore, requires a lower rate of return from the financial contract (lease), thus lowering the interest costs to the lessee. Through this financial instrument, the city or district has accessed the tax exempt debt market. Certificate of participation financing does not require voter approval. In California, the local legislative body (i.e., city council or board of supervisors) is empowered to enter into lease/purchase financing.

Private Donations

Because of their large impact on the communities they serve, high-profile projects such as community centers offer an attractive focus for fund-raising campaigns. One advantage of private donations is that (with the donor's permission) they can be used for any portion of the proposed project, including furniture, art, and technology as well as construction.

In addition to individuals and private foundations, the business community can be a source of donations for new community projects. Recent examples include a national drugstore chain donating funds to a library for development of business and conference facilities. Strategies such as naming rights can provide additional incentives for donations.