Chapter 5

Planning Area Strategies

INTRODUCTION

The 12 Planning Area Strategies set forth the basic concepts to be followed in park and open space planning within different communities in Oakland during the coming decades. Each Strategy translates the broad, citywide policies outlined in the OSCAR Element into more specific priorities for smaller geographic areas.

The Planning Areas encompass the entire city and range in size from 1,600 acres to 6,300 acres. Two of the 12 areas have no permanent population; the ten others have populations ranging from 15,000 to nearly 60,000. Each area has very different needs and priorities due to their distinct natural features, development patterns, and demographics. The Area Strategies provide a tool for responding to these differences within the overall framework established by the OSCAR Element.

Unlike the first three chapters of the OSCAR, which present binding policies to be adopted by the City Council, the Strategies present *recommendations* to be considered as future decisions are made on the City's parks and open spaces. The Strategies are not binding and are not intended to be the "last word" on the matters they address. Continued planning will be needed and more information will be required as site plans are developed for individual parks and strategies are prepared for conserving or enhancing specific open spaces.

Each Planning Area Strategy consists of a brief introductory statement followed by separate sections on open space and parks. The **open space recommendations** are based on the physical opportunities unique to each Area, such as underutilized sections of waterfront, creeks with potential access improvements, or surplus City properties with the potential to become new parks. The recommendations are based on the findings of the OSCAR natural resource and open space inventories, feedback from the OSCAR Advisory Committee, and suggestions from community meetings and neighborhood groups.

The **park recommendations** provide a synopsis of the major needs and opportunities for each park in each Planning Area. The recommendations are based on the OSCAR Resident Survey; feedback from neighborhood and community groups; interviews with staff, park users, and Recreation Advisory Council members; and visits to each park.

Each Strategy includes a map summarizing the recommendations. Again, any of these recommendations would require further study before being translated into specific capital improvement projects. As such projects are formulated and designed, additional input from the community and in some cases additional environmental review will be required.

NORTH OAKLAND

North Oakland encompasses 2,324 acres and has a population of about 46,000. The area contains two community parks, three neighborhood parks, one active mini-park and one passive mini-park, two linear parks, and one swimming pool/arts studio complex. There is also a large athletic field at Oakland Technical High School that is used for public recreation. Three of North Oakland's parks contain recreation centers.

Total park area, including the public schoolyards and athletic fields, is 54.50 acres. Per capita park acreage in North Oakland is 1.18 acres per 1,000 residents, which is just over one-fourth the citywide standard.

Figure 20 summarizes open space and park recommendations.

Open Space Recommendations

North Oakland is one of the most heavily urbanized parts of Oakland and, with a few exceptions, lacks undeveloped natural areas. Like West Oakland and the dense neighborhoods east of Lake Merritt, it is landlocked. However, because North Oakland is physically closer to the hillside open spaces, it is perceived as having greater access to open space than some of the other flatland districts. The hills are clearly visible from most of North Oakland and several of the regional parks (Lake Temescal, Claremont Canyon, etc.) are close by and accessible by bus or bicycle.

About 4 percent of North Oakland's total area (108 acres) consists of open space, including nearly 30 acres of schoolyards. The schoolyards offer great potential to enhance the area's appearance as well as its recreational amenities. Most are completely paved and, in many neighborhoods, they are the only available public open spaces. Claremont Middle, Emerson, and Wilson Schools in particular, appear to have high potential for schoolyard "greening." Piedmont Avenue School includes a buried section of Glen Echo Creek and offers some potential for a creek daylighting project.

Opportunities for new parks on vacant land are limited, although there may be some potential through street closures, redevelopment, and re-use of institutional uses. To the extent permitted by law, specific recommendations are laid out below:

- ✓ Retain wooded open space around St. Albert's and consider acquiring part of the site as a neighborhood park if it ever becomes available.
- ✓ Require daylighting of Temescal Creek as a condition of development approval for the old Vern's Shopping Center site (now a vacant lot)
- ✓ Pursue a trail connection between Hardy Park and Temescal Creek (DMV) Park along the flood control right of way.
- ✓ Include provisions for a public plaza or mini-park in any redevelopment or urban design plan for the area around the MacArthur BART station.
- ✓ Consider ways to enhance the flood control right-of-way along Temescal Creek between Martin Luther King Junior Way and Emeryville. Community gardening is already occurring at one site along the right-of-way and could be pursued elsewhere.
- ✓ Pursue a trail link from the Rockridge BART Station to the hills, via Chabot Neighborhood Park, Lake Temescal, and the North Oakland Sports Center.
- ✓ Consider the recreational potential of the old quarry pond adjacent to the Rockridge Shopping Center on Pleasant Valley Road.
- ✓ Encourage any new large-scale development in the College and Piedmont Avenue commercial districts to include small plazas or "pocket" parks.
- ✓ Promote improvements to the overall visual quality of the area through street tree planting, particularly in the neighborhoods west of Telegraph Avenue.

✓ Work with the Cities of Emeryville and Berkeley to improve pedestrian/ bicycle access between North Oakland and the new Eastshore State Park.

Park Recommendations

North Oakland contains two of Oakland's best known and well used *community* parks, Mosswood and Bushrod. These spacious parks are more than 80 years old and have played an important role in shaping North Oakland's development. The *neighborhood* parks of North Oakland are less well known and generally lack the facilities and acreage associated with neighborhood parks located elsewhere in the City. Many of the area's smaller parks were developed in conjunction with flood control or highway construction projects during the 1960s and 1970s. Some occupy less-than-ideal sites along (or even underneath) freeways and flood control easements.

Many parts of North Oakland are underserved by parks, particularly the Santa Fe, Rockridge, Temescal, and Piedmont Avenue neighborhoods. New neighborhood parks in these areas might be created through school greening projects or redevelopment, but opportunities on vacant sites are limited. Mini-parks or community gardens might be possible on individual vacant lots within these areas.

In the Temescal neighborhood, the athletic field at Oakland Tech might be more closely linked to the Studio One crafts center so that the complex could function more as a neighborhood park. In the Piedmont Avenue area, the Glen Echo Creek mini-park has some potential for expansion. Access improvements across MacArthur and Broadway might create stronger linkages from Piedmont Avenue to Mosswood Park.

Specific recommendations for North Oakland parks are laid out below. OSCAR Technical Report Volume 2 (Chapter 4) should be consulted for a comprehensive assessment of each park and more specific recommendations.

Bushrod Park. A Master Plan should be prepared for Bushrod Park. The Plan should explore changes in the park's design to make it more inviting, accessible, and visible, and to resolve conflicts between the different uses that occur within the park. Changes to be considered should include:

- relocating the gymnasium to Shattuck Avenue and reversing the orientation of the softball field;
- developing the new gymnasium as a multi-purpose facility, similar to the new Brookfield gym;
- increasing the range of activities accommodated in the park, including neighborhood fairs;
- improving physical connections between the park and Washington School, allowing them to function more as a unit;
- improving lighting, visibility, pedestrian access, and directional signs within the park;
- making miscellaneous physical improvements: updating the tot lot, new turf on the soccer field, improving the hard court play surfaces, providing water to the BBQ pits, new paths within the park, etc.;
- setting aside an area where dogs are allowed; and
- creating a central focus point (a fountain, etc) to draw people in.

Mosswood Park. As funding permits, the existing recreation center should be updated or replaced. Security improvements are needed at the center and teen activities also are needed. To avoid overflow impacts on the neighborhood, special events in the park should be community-oriented rather than regionally-oriented. The following specific recommendations are made for park improvements:

- Additional off-street parking may be needed near the recreation center;
- New bathrooms are needed (near the softball field); and
- The old croquet building next to the parking lot needs to be removed or refurbished. The horseshoe

courts and concessions building need to be refurbished.

Golden Gate. As at Bushrod Park, a master plan could benefit this park by proposing alternatives to the current site plan. The recreation center might serve the community better if it were located on San Pablo Avenue, where it would be more visible. Lighting improvements, better signage, and other improvements which make the park more accessible would be helpful.

Grove Shafter/ Marcus Garvey. This park actually occupies three of the four quadrants underneath the I-980/I-580 interchange. Stronger connections between the quadrants would be helpful. The children's play area might be relocated so that it is more visible from Martin Luther King Junior Way.

Hardy Park. Hardy is presently too small to adequately serve as a neighborhood park. Expansion west along Temescal Creek should be pursued, linking this park to the existing linear park behind the Department of Motor Vehicles. Better signage and lighting are needed at the park. A portion of the park has been approved for use as a dog run area. Ideally, a larger area for dogs should be established elsewhere in North Oakland, possibly at Bushrod Park.

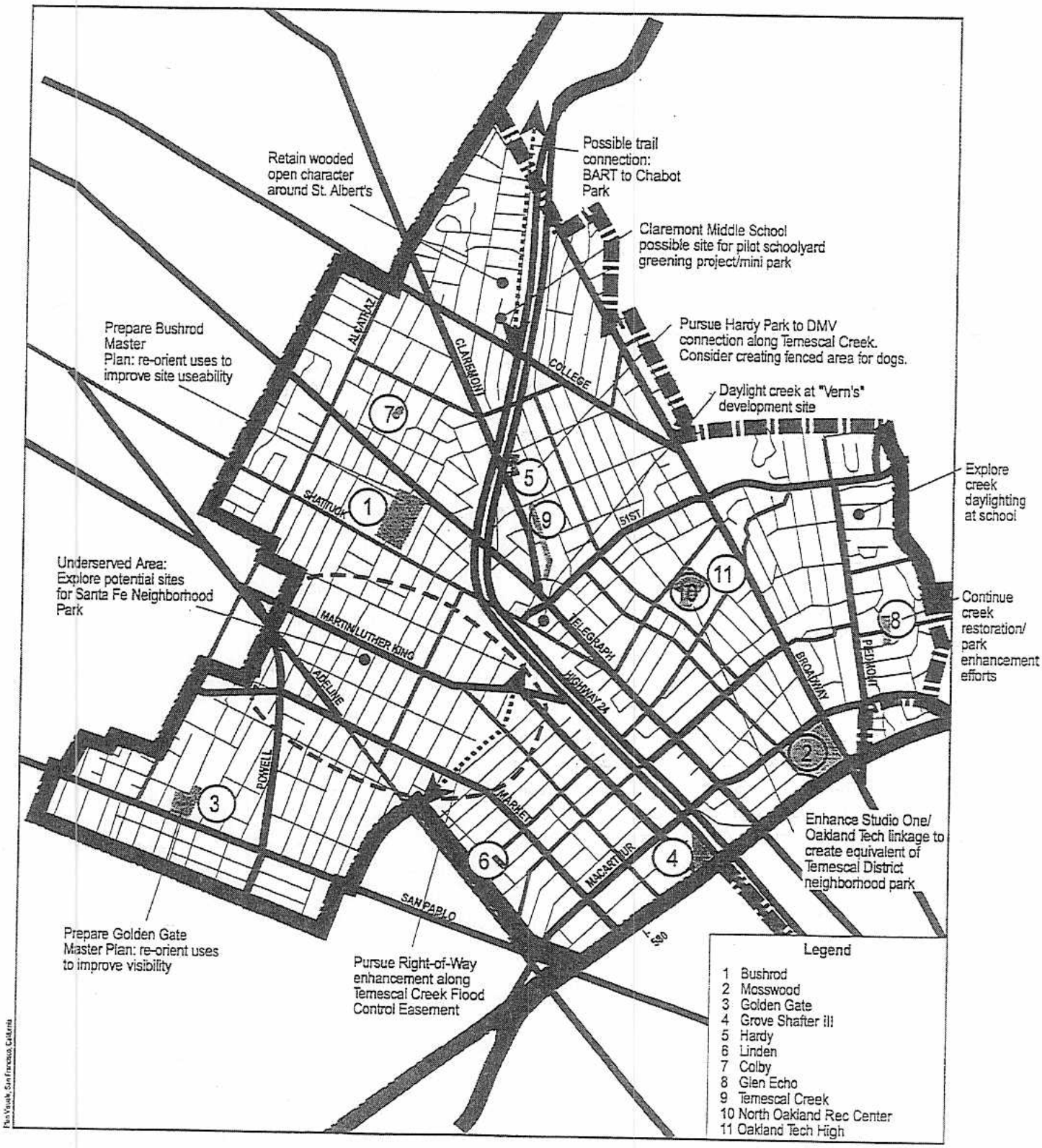
Linden Street Park. The park provides a good example of a successful active mini-park. Continued maintenance and landscaping should be encouraged, and opportunities to expand the park on nearby underutilized sites (possibly for community gardening) should be explored.

Colby Park. Maintenance of the new tot lot should be encouraged. Due to the small size and passive character of the park, no further structural improvements should be pursued.

Glen Echo Park. Expansion of the trail within the flood control easement (from Panama Court to Glen Avenue) should be pursued.

Temescal Creek Park. Possibilities to expand this linear (creek) park in either direction should be explored, with a connection to Hardy Park on the east and Shattuck Avenue on the west.

Temescal Pool/ Studio One/ Oakland Tech Field. This complex of recreational uses is generally not regarded as a City park. However, with comparatively little investment, it could function as one. Studio One itself could use renovation and possible expansion. Stronger physical connections to the swimming pool and high school would be helpful.



City of Oakland
Open Space, Conservation, & Recreation Element
Figure 20: North Oakland Major Recommendations
Source: Oakland Office of Planning & Building, 1995

WEST OAKLAND

West Oakland encompasses 1,610 acres and has a population of about 23,300. The area contains one community park, six neighborhood parks, five active mini-parks, and two athletic field areas. Two of the parks contain recreation centers.

Total park area, including schoolyards and athletic fields, is 56.70 acres. This equates to 2.43 acres of improved parkland/playground area per 1,000 residents, which is 60 percent of the proposed service standard. Despite the deficiency, West Oakland has more park acreage per capita than any other flatland neighborhood in Oakland. It is the only Planning Area with two public swimming pools and it contains the highest concentration of athletic fields and mini-parks in the city. Even so, West Oakland's parks tend to be clustered in the center of the District (about 80 percent of the park acreage is located between 12th and 20th Streets); some of the outlying areas are deficient and have no neighborhood parks.

Figure 21 summarizes open space and park recommendations.

Open Space Recommendations

Most of the open space in West Oakland consists of storage yards, parking lots, land around vacant buildings, and other "functional" uses. In fact, about 10 percent of West Oakland consists of open space of one kind or another. There are very few remaining "natural" features such as creeks, forests, and grasslands; however portions of the neighborhood were once forested with oak trees while other areas contained marshes and sloughs. The community is also quite flat, an attribute that is reflected in its rectangular street grid.

The Mandela Parkway median is one of the largest open spaces in the area, forming a mile-long, block-wide swath through the neighborhood. The parkway offers an exciting opportunity to link some of the existing parks and open spaces in West Oakland, and to connect West Oakland with the Estuary and Bay shorelines. Other opportunities for parks may exist within redeveloping industrial sites (Judson Steel, Carnation, Coca Cola, etc.), at the old AMTRAK station, and along the edge of the new Cypress Freeway.

To the extent permitted by law, specific recommendations are laid out below:

- ✓ Accommodate pedestrian and bicycle travel from West Oakland BART to the Emeryville via the Mandela Parkway median. At least one of the re-use options for Mandela Parkway should consider retaining the median as a landscaped park, possibly incorporating the "African cultural village" envisioned by the Coalition for West Oakland Revitalization.

- ✓ Improve access to the shoreline. This should include construction of the Bay Trail, along with spur trails along Maritime and 7th Street/ Middle Harbor Road.

- ✓ Where feasible, incorporate connections (arcades, landscaped easements, etc.) to parks in West Oakland (DeFremery, Lowell, Raimondi) as old industrial sites along Mandela Parkway are redeveloped.

- ✓ Pursue a South Prescott Park (near 3rd and Henry Streets) adjacent to the new Cypress Freeway.

- ✓ Pursue schoolyard "greening," particularly in the northeast part of West Oakland (Hoover/ Foster), where there are no neighborhood parks. McClymonds High School is located in an area with relatively little open space and its field could become a more accessible community resource.

- ✓ Establish stronger connections between the existing parks in the Oak Center neighborhood. The area contains a high concentration of parkland (Lowell, DeFremery, Wade Johnson, Marston Campbell), but there are no bike lanes or signs indicating how to get from one park to the next.

- ✓ Include provisions for a public plaza in any redevelopment plan or urban design plan for the West Oakland BART Station.

- ✓ Continue street tree planting efforts and other programs to "green" West Oakland.

- ✓ Explore opportunities to restore natural landscape features, including oak trees and drainageways.

Park Recommendations

West Oakland includes a mix of old, established parks that have been around for nearly a century, and newer parks that are the result of urban renewal efforts in the 1960s and 1970s. Park area increased by about 50 percent during these two decades. However, parts of West Oakland are still not adequately served by neighborhood parks, particularly the Prescott/ South Prescott areas and the Hoover/ Foster areas.

While the older, more established parks like DeFremery tend to attract large numbers of people, some of the newer parks are underutilized. These parks could benefit from improved access, better signage, new activities, supervised programs, and additional security. For the most part, the cluster of parks at the heart of West Oakland are an amenity with the potential to bolster efforts to revitalize the neighborhood and maintain a strong sense of community.

West Oakland also contains a large number of mini-parks and plazas. Some provide a recreational amenity for young children, and others are primarily attracting the homeless and unemployed. A greater variety of activities (community gardening, etc.) along with security improvements (lighting, ornamental gates, etc.) might help make these parks more hospitable to a broader range of users.

Recommendations for specific West Oakland parks are outlined below. OSCAR Technical Report Volume 2 (Chapter 4) should be consulted for a comprehensive assessment of each park and more specific recommendations.

DeFremery. A DeFremery Master Plan should be prepared at some point to guide the long-term use of this very heavily used park.

The park would benefit from updated play equipment, resurfaced basketball courts, and a refurbishing of the DeFremery House to make it more functional for recreational uses (lighting improvements, painting, drinking fountains, carpet, etc.). The swimming pool building also is in need of remodeling. Bleachers adjacent to the softball field would be helpful.

Lowell. Lowell handles much of the overflow from DeFremery and accommodates a large number of organized ball games. Stronger physical connections to DeFremery (signs, a bike lane, etc.) would be helpful. The park could also use updated children's play equipment and restored basketball courts.

Poplar. This neighborhood park has some potential for expansion on to the unused right-of-way "triangles" along Peralta Street and the lawn area behind Clawson School. Any re-use plan for the school should consider opportunities to enlarge the park in that direction. The existing recreation center is quite small, and would benefit from modernization, additional storage space and showers.

Wade Johnson. This little known park suffers from poor visibility. It would benefit from access and signage improvements, as well as new activities like community gardening. The park could be better linked to Mandela Parkway, one block west, and Lowell Park, two blocks east.

Marston Campbell. This park is more visible than Wade Johnson, but also suffers from low name recognition. Many residents regard it as an extension of nearby Lafayette School rather than a neighborhood park. The park would benefit from bike path linkages to DeFremery Park and Lowell Park, each a few blocks away, and to Downtown Oakland, just five blocks east. During OSCAR community meetings, some residents expressed interest in using part of this park as a miniature golf course.

Willow Street. This small neighborhood park works well but is not large enough to meet the needs of the Prescott neighborhood. Opportunities for expansion should be pursued.

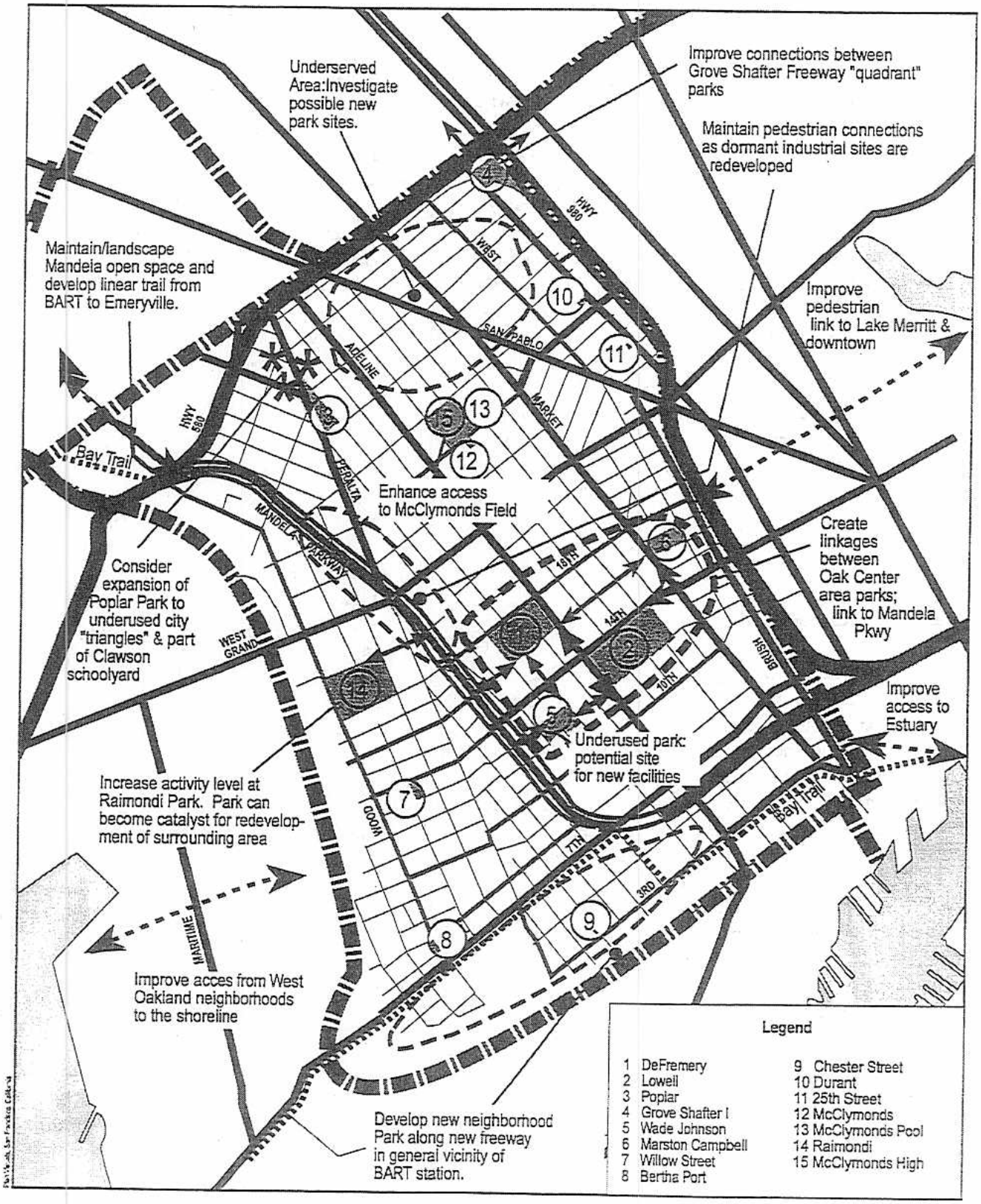
Bertha Port. Greater name recognition (or a new name commemorating a historic figure) would be helpful.

Durant Mini-Park. Improved connections to Foster Middle School would be helpful, possibly integrating the park with a partially "greened" schoolyard and developing such amenities as a community garden or adventure play area. The park currently feels "lost" between the MLK Jr. Way commercial strip and the school.

25th Street Mini-Park. Public safety and landscaping improvements would be helpful.

McClymonds Mini-Park/ Athletic Field/ Pool. This open space area is located in a part of West Oakland with relatively poor access to open space. The ideal solution would be to relocate the mini-park to a site adjacent to the athletic field, so that the entire complex could function as a new neighborhood park (similar to Franklin Park in the San Antonio area). Until this becomes feasible, the existing facilities should be maintained and their availability for public use should be made more clear.

Raimondi Field. This park is an important resource not only for West Oakland but for the entire city. Raimondi is the largest and oldest park in the area and is one of the few Oakland parks located in a non-residential setting. The site is also one of the few in the city that consists of a large, flat, unobstructed lawn. Raimondi can potentially accommodate more evening/ weekend games and special events than it does currently. Visibility and access to the park will be improved by the completion of the new Cypress Freeway. The field and adjacent properties (including the nearby AMTRAK station) would benefit from a master plan which looks at the long-term relationship between uses and the potential for complementary development nearby.



City of Oakland
Open Space, Conservation, & Recreation Element
Figure 21: West Oakland: Major Recommendations
Source: Oakland Office of Planning & Building, 1995

CENTRAL

The Central Planning Area encompasses 1,607 acres and has a population of about 28,800. It includes Downtown, Chinatown, Pill Hill, South-of-Nimitz, and the Adams Point and Richmond Boulevard areas. The area contains one Region-Serving Park, five Neighborhood Parks, one mini-park, four Linear Parks, and five Special Use Parks. The Special Use Parks include three city squares which date back to Oakland's incorporation in 1852. The one Region-Serving Park, Lakeside, is probably the best known and most heavily used park in the city. The area's parks include two recreation centers.

Total park area, including two schoolyards, is 117 acres. The bulk of this acreage is within Lakeside Park which serves a much broader radius than the Central District. Discounting Lakeside to account for its regional draw, park acreage per capita is 1.65 acres per 1,000 residents.

Figure 22 summarizes park and open space recommendations.

Open Space Recommendations

About 12 percent of the Central/ Chinatown Planning Area consists of open land. Other than parkland, most of the open space consists of large surface (pay) parking lots and vacant development sites in Downtown Oakland. Major concentrations of parking exist in the triangle between San Pablo and Telegraph Avenues, along 12th Street, and in the Downtown blocks immediately north of Grand Avenue. Other major open spaces include the Laney College athletic fields and vacant sites at Jack London Square. The neighborhoods north of Grand Avenue have very little open space.

To the extent permitted by law, major recommendations for open space are outlined below *(The Open Space Chapter of OSCAR includes additional recommendations for Downtown).*

- √ Make provisions for sunlit plazas, pedestrian spaces, and "pocket" parks as Downtown redevelopment occurs. The feasibility of a "Fox Plaza" in front of the Fox Theater should be further explored as revitalization plans for this area evolve.

- √ Implement the plan for City Hall Plaza, making this space more useable and attractive while retaining its historic elements.

- √ Continue to improve access between Downtown Oakland and Jack London Square.

- √ Improve shoreline access within Jack London Square *(see the Open Space Chapter on this subject).*

- √ Explore possible sites for a mini-park or community garden in the Adams Point area.

- √ Pursue a new city square or small neighborhood park in the neighborhood west of Broadway and north of 14th Street. The area has no public open space and has considerable residential development potential.

- √ Include linear shoreline access where feasible in any future redevelopment plans for the Clinton Basin/ 9th Avenue Terminal area.

- √ Capitalize on the presence of Lake Merritt and Lakeside Park in the perimeter neighborhoods. This could include creating a more strongly defined "Lake District" neighborhood within Oakland, with stronger gateways, views, and pedestrian connections to the perimeter park.

- √ Encourage circulation changes on the perimeter of the lake which widen park borders or make the lake more accessible from nearby neighborhoods. A pedestrian system that weaves together Downtown parks, offices, residential areas, the waterfront, and Lake Merritt should ultimately be achieved.

- ✓ Make better use of rooftops in the denser parts of the Central Area. Projects like the Kaiser rooftop garden should be encouraged.

- ✓ Construct a pedestrian bridge over the double railroad tracks separating Channel Park from Estuary Park, and consider converting the old Union Pacific rail bridge across the tidal channel into a pedestrian/bicycle bridge.

Park Recommendations

The Central Area's parks are unique among those in Oakland, reflecting the area's historic character, its longstanding position as the region's civic and business core, and its proximity to Lake Merritt. Only a handful of the parks are traditional neighborhood parks, with familiar facilities like baseball and soccer fields. Many of the parks serve primarily aesthetic rather than recreational functions. On the other hand, Lakeside Park is Oakland's recreational melting pot and draws visitors from all across the East Bay.

The Central Area provides a cross-section of all the various conditions to be found in Oakland's parks within a relatively small geographic area. Some are immaculately maintained and very highly regarded; others appear neglected and may even feel unsafe to walk through in broad daylight. The area's parks are supplemented by Laney College athletic fields and facilities, urban plazas and lawn areas, and roof gardens at such locations as the Oakland Museum.

Several of this area's parks are historically significant. Lafayette, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Harrison Squares date back to the city's first deed of partition (1853). Today, the squares provide an important recreational and visual resource for the Central Business District. Lakeside Park (1907) includes a number of historic structures, such as the bandshell and McElroy Fountain.

Specific recommendations for the parks are presented below. OSCAR Technical Report Volume 2 (Chapter 4) should be consulted for a comprehensive assessment of each park and more specific recommendations.

Lakeside Park. Short-range, mid-range, and long-range park improvement needs for Lakeside Park were identified in a 1988 Community Assistance Team Study by the American Society of Landscape Architects. A Lake Merritt Advisory Committee was formed as a result of that study, and the group is now pursuing funding for a park master plan. One goal of the plan is to increase the perception of the park as a single unit rather than a series of disjointed spaces (Lakeside, Snow, Eastshore, Adams, Pine Knoll, Athol Plaza, Cleveland Cascade, Rancho Peralta, and Channel Park).

Among the short-range needs are erosion control and bulkhead restoration, restoration of the fountain and bandshell, and creation of park "gateways." Local residents also have identified short-range needs for better play equipment and better connections between the park and the 19th Street BART Station. Mid-range needs include widening of park borders and improvements to the perimeter trail. Long-range possibilities include redesign of the 12th Street viaduct to create a "lid park" between the lake and the Kaiser Convention Center.

The Lake Merritt Master Plan should also address conflicts between park activities and nearby neighborhoods. If special events like the Festival at the Lake are to continue, they must be planned to minimize off-site noise, traffic, and parking problems. More stringent parking restrictions and more frequent bus and BART shuttle service may be needed.

Estuary Park. Estuary Park has tremendous potential but suffers from poor visibility, isolation from other parks, and poor internal circulation. Improvements should include better signage, redesign of the parking area, renovation of the pavilion, and construction of a pedestrian bridge across the railroad to Channel Park. A landscape screen is needed between the park and Portobello to buffer the residential units from park noise. A boating center has been proposed for the Park and may be constructed in the future.

Lincoln Square. This urban space is the most popular park in Chinatown and receives very heavy use. It would benefit from some greening of the asphalt area, an upgraded children's play area, and an enclosed outdoor patio area adjacent to the recreation center.

Grove Shafter/ Marcus Garvey. Stronger connections are needed between this park and the hospitals at Pill Hill. Currently, the park is not well used and is prone to vandalism.

Jefferson. This park has served the surrounding area for 140 years, but has suffered a decline in use as a result of the construction of freeways on two sides, and the change in the neighborhood from a residential area to an institutional and marginal commercial area. The park would benefit if some of the adjoining parcels were redeveloped with housing (including transitional housing or SROs), or if there were organized activities such as fairs or concerts. Jefferson is the only lighted ballfield in the Central District and its increased use for league games (including Downtown offices and police leagues) could stimulate park activity. Renovation of the recreation center, either as a facility serving Downtown office workers, or as a multi-purpose center, could be considered as funding permits (renovation could be funded through development agreements as the surrounding area redevelops).

Snow. This busy Downtown park provides a model that might be repeated elsewhere in the Central district. Care should be taken to maintain the character of this park and not overload it with too many activities.

Eastshore. This neighborhood park is very heavily used, but is difficult to get to on foot or by bicycle. Circulation changes at the connector between Lakeshore and Grand (adjacent to the pergola) could potentially increase the park's area and improve access. The park is also a logical "gateway" to the lake area and would benefit from signage improvements or even a monument or fountain of some sort. The park would also benefit from modernized play equipment. It is generally a better site for active recreation than nearby Lakeside Park due to the large open lawn area.

Oak Park. This playground adjacent to the former Edison School requires improved signage, lighting, maintenance, and landscaping. Community assistance in park rehabilitation would be helpful.

Channel. The lack of a connection to Estuary Park is a strong deterrent to more intensive use of this park. A southward extension of the trail, including a railroad crossing, is needed.

Oak Glen. The park works well as a passive open space and aesthetic amenity. It provides a good opportunity to visit one of Oakland's few natural creek segments. Maintenance and lighting changes might improve park safety. The possibility of extending this park (and daylighting the creek) as far north as MacArthur Boulevard could be explored in the future. A creekside trail south to 29th Street and ultimately continuing on to Lake Merritt also should be pursued.

Jack London Promenade. The promenade should ultimately be improved and extended west to the FDR Pier and east to Estuary Park.

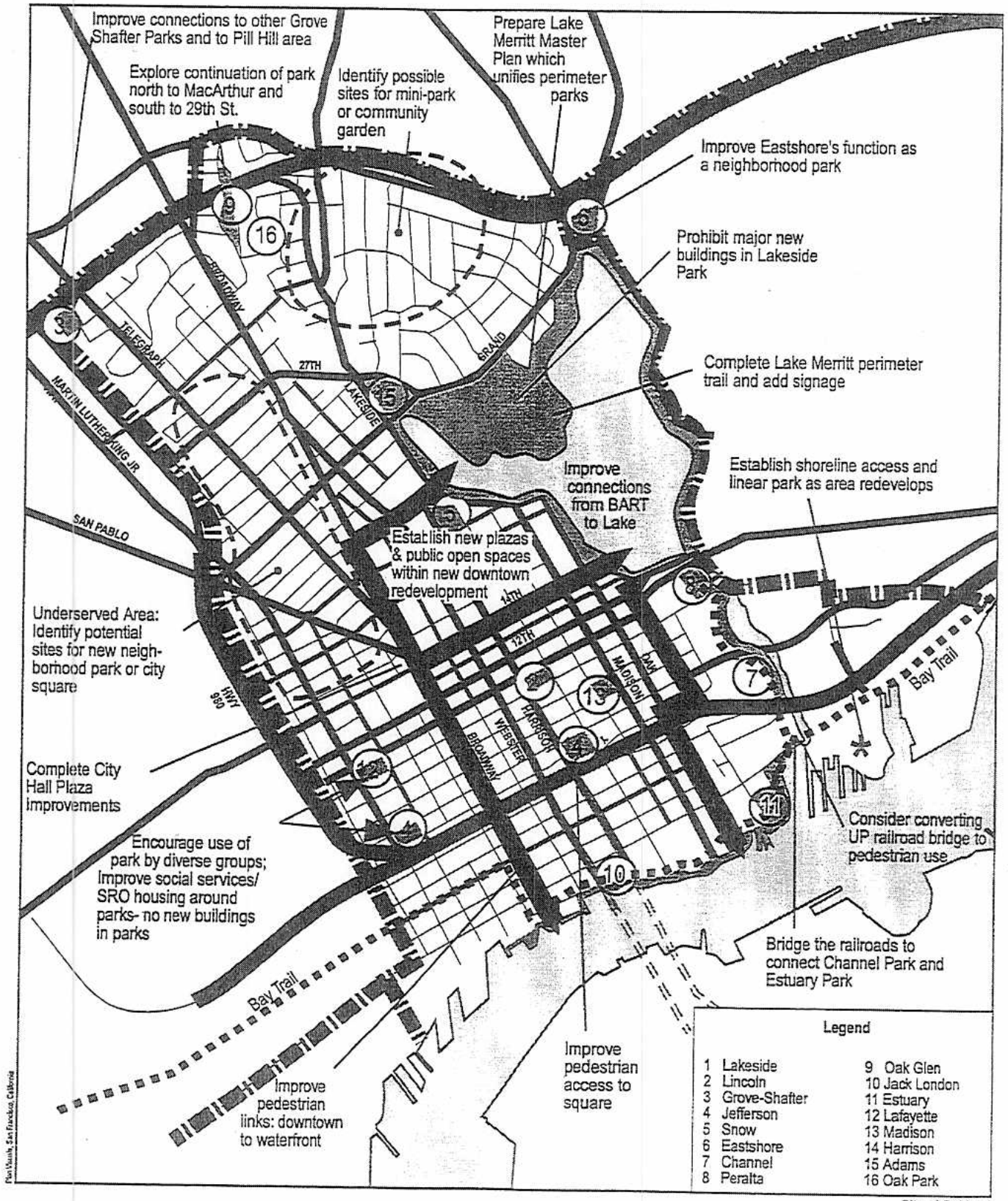
Rancho Peralta. The park provides a logical outdoor extension to the Kaiser Convention Center and might be more heavily used for outdoor receptions and events associated with the Convention Center. Maintenance and ornamental landscaping of this passive open space should be continued.

Lafayette Square. A Master Plan for the square was recently completed. The new Plan accommodates a diverse range of users (including neighborhood residents, homeless persons, and Downtown office workers) while preserving the historic character of the park and improving its safety and physical appearance.

Madison Square. The park is relatively successful and requires no major changes. The Chinese theme design has given the park character and helped create a sense of ownership in the neighborhood. This might be carried a step further through additional landscape design improvements.

Harrison Square. A Chinese Community Center was recently constructed in this historic park, dramatically changing its character. Access improvements across 7th Street are now needed to ensure pedestrian safety and the usefulness of the Park.

Adams Park. This landscaped area around the Veterans War Memorial requires no major changes at this time.



City of Oakland

Open Space, Conservation, & Recreation Element

Figure 22: Chinatown/Central Major Recommendations

Source: Oakland Office of Planning & Building, 1995

SAN ANTONIO

The San Antonio Planning Area covers 1,876 acres and has a population of about 59,000. It has the highest population density of Oakland's twelve planning areas. The area contains one community park, nine neighborhood parks, one active mini-park and two passive mini-parks, a linear park, three special use parks, including a public swimming pool, and an athletic field at Oakland High School. Three of the parks contain recreation centers, and two more contain educational buildings. The parks are supplemented by about 7 acres of schoolyards and school playgrounds at eight schools.

Total park area, including schoolyards and school athletic fields, is 46.2 acres. This equates to about 0.78 acres of park/schoolyard area per 1,000 residents, which is about one-fifth the city standard.

Figure 23 summarizes open space and park recommendations.

Open Space Recommendations

Although the San Antonio area has very little open space, its rolling terrain and ridges create panoramic vistas and provide some visual relief. Only about 5 percent of the district is open, and much of the open land is not readily accessible to the general public. The area's largest open space surrounds the covered EBMUD reservoir on 23rd Avenue.

The San Antonio area has a number of natural features which could be enhanced, including a mile of Estuary shoreline and several sections of Sausal Creek. Currently, the shoreline is difficult to get to, particularly on foot or by bicycle. The freeway and railroads present major barriers, and crossings are limited. The creek is mostly contained on private property but there are a handful of public and institutional uses along the banks where access might be improved.

As in other parts of Oakland, school grounds in the San Antonio area consist mostly of asphalt yards. However, some of the sites provide good examples of how adjacent school and park uses can be integrated. Both Garfield and Franklin combine City-owned ballfields with OUSD schoolyards, enabling them to serve as full neighborhood parks for the surrounding areas.

To the extent permitted by law, specific recommendations for open space are presented below:

- ✓ Develop the Bay Trail along the Embarcadero.
- ✓ Create stronger connections between the shoreline and the neighborhoods north of I-880; 16th Avenue provides a straight shot from San Antonio Park to the waterfront but the I-880 flyover is narrow and difficult to cross by foot or bike. Pedestrian and bicycle improvements would be helpful.
- ✓ Explore the possibilities for redevelopment of open spaces along the shoreline as parks or developments with shoreline access.
- ✓ Explore access improvements to Sausal Creek on public and institutional properties. On private properties, vegetation along the creek provides visual relief and should be retained.
- ✓ Additional tree planting should be encouraged. Street trees tend to be less abundant here than in North and West Oakland. The 14th Avenue median should be enhanced.
- ✓ Explore limited public access to some of the perimeter open space around the 27-acre EBMUD Central Reservoir.
- ✓ Increase the use of schoolyards for recreation, and the appearance of schoolyards in general. Schoolyards could partially offset the lack of greenery and open space within the neighborhood. With about 2 acres of blacktop, Roosevelt School would be a good candidate for greening.

- ✓ As the East 14th Street corridor redevelops, pursue opportunities to create new plazas or small public open spaces.

- ✓ Establish a community garden site in the neighborhood. Individual vacant lots, schoolyards, and the larger parks (especially William Wood) offer possible opportunities.

Park Recommendations

The San Antonio area contains some of Oakland's oldest parks, including two which began as "town squares" for the area's early settlements. The area includes a cluster of unique parks along the eastern shore of Lake Merritt, as well as the more traditional community and neighborhood parks. Three of the neighborhood parks adjoin elementary schools and are used jointly by the School District and the City. Most of the area's parks are very heavily used, due in part to the area's high density and the large concentration of children in the neighborhood.

Given the density, large household sizes, lack of private yards, and absence of other large parks in this neighborhood and in Fruitvale, San Antonio's parks are a critical local resource. They tend to be more heavily used than parks in other parts of Oakland.

Recommendations for specific parks are presented below. OSCAR Technical Report Volume 2 (Chapter 4) should be consulted for a comprehensive assessment of each park and more specific recommendations.

San Antonio Park. As the largest park in the District and the area's only "community" park, San Antonio is under great pressure to accommodate more intense activity. The pressure is compounded by the fact that the surrounding area is very dense and includes a large low-income immigrant population with high demand for social services and limited access to private recreation. It is imperative that the park remain as a large open space and that the need for social services be accommodated on properties around the park rather than in the park itself.

San Antonio is also a historic park. Measures which commemorate its colorful past, including historic landmark designation, plaques, and public art should be encouraged. Planned improvements to the soccer fields should be completed, but the character of the park should not be significantly changed. The park's tot lot was recently upgraded with a grant from an anonymous donor.

Opportunities to expand San Antonio Park or add recreational facilities on perimeter properties should be pursued. There are a few vacant sites near the park which could potentially accommodate new recreational or community buildings.

Clinton Square. This traditional urban square would benefit from refurbishing and overall landscape improvements. Like San Antonio Park, it is very heavily used and is an asset to the dense neighborhood which surrounds it. The park is currently planned for renovation.

Manzanita. The recreation center was recently renamed after the late Ernest Robinson, the man who was instrumental in the park's creation and who chaired its recreation advisory council. The park is presently too small to function as a true neighborhood park, and opportunities for expansion should be pursued. Better visibility from East 27th Street would improve security and access. The park should be promoted as a neighborhood focal point and should be considered as a site for neighborhood-oriented fairs and events.

Francis Marion (FM) Smith. The recreation center appears to be in need of seismic upgrading and disabled access improvements. The play equipment should be updated. Expansion of this park, which is very heavily used and quite small, should be pursued as opportunities arise and funding allows.

Central Reservoir. This neighborhood park suffers from poor access and low visibility. A second point of ingress/egress (from Sheffield Avenue) would be helpful. Signage improvements and new neighborhood-oriented activities (community gardening, etc.) would be appropriate.

William Wood. This park has much untapped potential. Sausal Creek is an underutilized asset and should be restored and enhanced as a park focal point. Access improvements are needed from the School Street (Fruitvale Avenue) side of the park. New passive activities, like community gardening and picnicking,

would be appropriate. The site also could become a "dog walking" park, since it is relatively large and open. The passive quality of the space should be retained; because of its setting, Wood is not an appropriate location for ballfields or major physical improvements.

Garfield. New children's play apparatus would help Garfield better fulfill its role as a neighborhood park.

Bella Vista. Bella Vista does not currently fit the image of a neighborhood park since it is entirely paved and lacks trees or greenery. It would help to designate at least part of the site for passive uses, replacing the asphalt with grass and incorporating picnic tables and landscaping.

Athol Plaza. This small park should remain as a passive open space with adjacent tennis courts. Additional landscaping and seating areas (perhaps with built-in chessboards) would be appropriate but more intensive uses would reduce the value of the park as open space.

Morgan Plaza. This park suffers from very low name recognition, no signage, low visibility, and poor physical condition. The neighborhood should be involved in revitalizing the space, possibly with new play equipment and landscaping.

Park Boulevard Plaza. The plaza should remain a passive open space, possibly with minor landscape improvements.

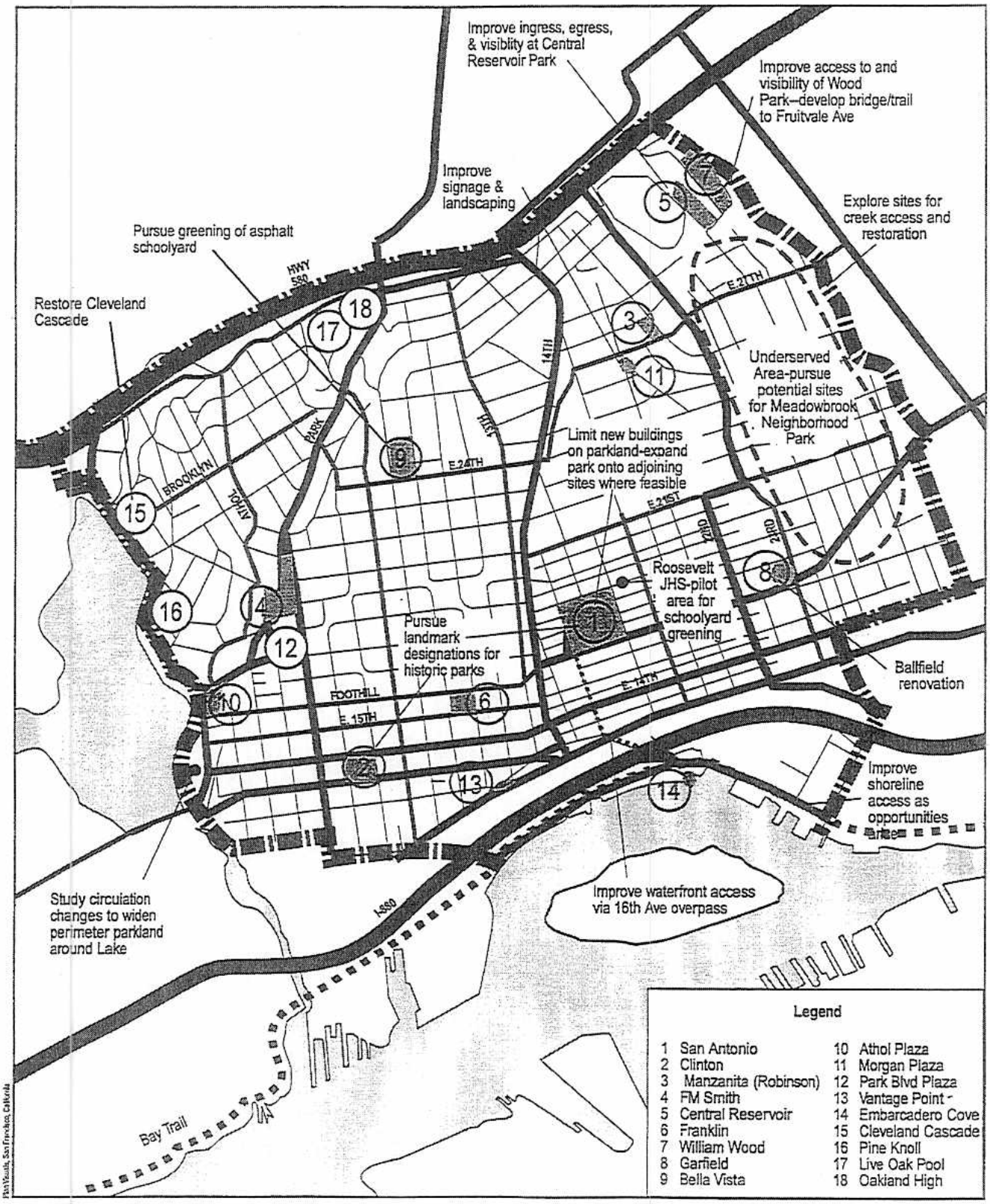
Vantage Point. The park would benefit from an identification sign, a historic marker, and an additional access point (a staircase) to East 8th Street. It should remain a passive open space.

San Antonio Pier/ Embarcadero Cove. Better signage, kiosks, "You Are Here" maps, and public information would benefit these areas. The park and promenade are attractive and well maintained, but many nearby residents are not aware that they exist.

Cleveland Cascade. The Cascade should be considered for addition to the Historic Preservation Study List. As funding permits, restoration of its original features should be pursued.

Pine Knoll. Pine Knoll should remain a passive, landscaped open space.

Live Oak Pool/ Oakland High Field. The pool/ high school complex does not currently function as a park. Access improvements would be helpful, as the facility provides the only football field and swimming pool in the District.



1/4 Mile

City of Oakland
General Plan Element
Figure 23: San Antonio Major Recommendations
Source: Oakland Office of Planning & Building, 1995

FRUITVALE

The Fruitvale Planning Area encompasses 1,661 acres and has a population of about 35,700. The area contains one Community Park, three Neighborhood Parks, four Active Mini-parks, one linear park, and one Special Use (Historic) Park. Three of the parks contain recreation center buildings. The District also contains athletic fields at Fruitvale School and about 6 acres of playgrounds and schoolyards at seven public schools.

Total park area, including the school properties, is about 24.4 acres. In all, there are 0.68 acres of parkland/schoolyard per 1,000 residents in the area, or roughly one-sixth the standard adopted by the City. This is the lowest per capita ratio in the city.

Figure 24 summarizes open space and park recommendations.

Open Space Recommendations

With just 77 acres of undeveloped land, Fruitvale has the smallest open space acreage of the city's twelve planning areas and ranks among the smallest in its percentage of total area in open space. With the exception of a few vacant sites along the Estuary and several underutilized industrial sites, the area lacks large open spaces. The small acreage that does exist is nearly evenly split between parks, parking lots, vacant lots, schoolyards, and land around vacant buildings.

Most of the open space is located below East 14th Street. Much of this space is not readily accessible to the general public and consists of old industrial sites awaiting redevelopment.

The handful of undeveloped natural areas in Fruitvale lie adjacent to its two creeks -- Sausal and Peralta. The area also contains about a mile of Estuary shoreline, although this area is industrial in character and is not easily accessible to the public.

Schoolyards provide an important supplement to the parks for local recreation. The baseball field adjacent to Fruitvale School doubles as a neighborhood park, providing amenities that are lacking in Brookdale, Allendale, and other area parks. Schoolyards at Jefferson, Hamilton, Whitton, Hawthorne, and Lazear Schools consist of asphalt play surfaces.

Opportunities for new parks exist within redevelopment sites, particularly below East 14th Street and along the Estuary. Other opportunities may be created through street closures, re-use of older institutional uses, improved access to parks in nearby areas, and access to flood control easements.

To the extent permitted by law, specific recommendations are outlined below:

- ✓ Improve the condition of the creeks at Whitton, Hawthorne, and Hamilton schoolyards. The schoolyards are traversed by creeks which are either buried or depressed in ditches on the school property. They have the potential to become visual, ecological, educational, and recreational resources.

- ✓ Retain natural vegetation along Sausal and Peralta Creeks and pursue creekside parks or trails as opportunities arise.

- ✓ Accommodate pedestrian access and include public open space in major developments along East 14th Street, particularly around the BART station.

- ✓ Retain the Santa Rita Land Trust property ("Jungle Hill") as open space and possibly develop the site as a park or community garden.

- ✓ Pursue extension of the linear trail along Peralta Creek at Peralta Hacienda.

- ✓ Include provisions for a new neighborhood park in the redeveloping sites south of East 14th Street (Kennedy Tract/ Lazear School neighborhood). The park should replace lost open space at the former Kennedy Tract Park and the poorly sited tot lot at 29th Avenue and I-880.

- ✓ Construct the Bay Trail along an alignment as close as possible to the waters edge. An "interim" trail alignment should follow local streets in the industrial areas, and an "ultimate" trail alignment should be indicated along the waterfront as properties redevelop.

- ✓ Wherever feasible, incorporate shoreline access as sites along the Estuary are redeveloped.

- ✓ Pursue a new shoreline park or fishing pier between Union Point Basin and High Street.

- ✓ Consider opportunities for a landscaped bike path in the BART right of way between Fruitvale Station and High Street.

- ✓ Achieve better shoreline access through improvements to the 23rd, 29th, and Fruitvale Avenue crossings of I-880 and the railroads.

- ✓ Promote improvements to the overall visual quality of Fruitvale through street tree planting.

Park Recommendations

The Fruitvale area lacks a large central urban park on the scale of San Antonio Park or Arroyo Viejo. The parks that do exist tend to be very heavily used; maintenance and facility conditions vary from park to park, but there appears to be a consistent need for modernization and updating of playground equipment and recreation buildings as well as a severe shortage of overall open space.

One key deficiency in Fruitvale is that the parks that do exist are too small to serve the necessary functions. For instance, Brookdale is less than half the size of an "ideal" community park, and Sanborn is less than half the size of an "ideal" neighborhood park. Both parks are already very crowded and there is great pressure on the limited open space areas to accommodate yet more activities. As a result of the small size of the parks, there is also a shortage of active recreational facilities such as ballfields and tennis.

Other parts of Fruitvale lack access to parks altogether. The Harrington/ Jefferson area (38th Ave/ Santa Rita) and the Kennedy Tract lack neighborhood parks. Fruitvale's parks are also generally lacking in "natural" open space. Peralta Hacienda is the only one which contains woodland vegetation. Sanborn includes a creek, but it has been buried and backfilled for flood control.

Specific recommendations for Fruitvale's parks are laid out below. OSCAR Technical Report Volume 2 (Chapter 4) should be consulted for a comprehensive assessment of each park and more specific recommendations.

Brookdale. At 4.7 acres, Brookdale is the smallest community-serving park in the city. Opportunities for site expansion should be pursued and the park should provide a level of service on par with DeFremery, Mosswood, and other community-serving parks in Oakland. The expansion area should include a site for a new gymnasium and recreation center, as the existing center is outdated and is too small to meet the community's needs.

As the major park serving an area of 35,000 people, the park also needs updated children's play equipment, security and lighting improvements, and some off-street parking. The possibility of a swimming pool also should be considered (not within existing park borders, but on an expansion site).

Despite the small size of the park, parts of the site are not well used and have poor visibility. Maintenance and landscaping of the wooded hill and grassy knoll behind the recreation center should be a priority. The park would also benefit from a pedestrian crosswalk at High Street and a connection to the new linear trail and park being constructed along Courtland Creek.

Sanborn. This neighborhood park is even more of a community focal point than Brookdale, although it is much smaller and less visible. The park is one of the most crowded in the city, serving an area with relatively high densities, low incomes, and poor access to recreation. The park would benefit from modernization (or full replacement) of the outdated recreation center, newer and more interesting children's play equipment, new patio tables and benches, and restoration of the basketball courts. To this end, Sanborn Park is scheduled for renovation in the future with a grant from the Lilah

improvements, and possible extension of the creek trail to Hamilton Junior High School. The house itself should continue to be used for community meetings and should eventually include a historical museum. Additional public information on its history, location, and significance should be made available.

Fruitvale School. Continued public access to this OUSD property is essential, as it is the only football field in the Fruitvale area.

Wallace Foundation. If the recreation center is modernized, it needs to be retrofitted for disabled access.

Evening lighting and security both need to be improved at Sanborn Park, and regular maintenance is imperative due to the very high levels of use. The park is appropriate for small neighborhood fairs, but is too small for larger events. New social service buildings within park boundaries would be inappropriate due to the small size and crowded condition of the park.

Sanbom provides a good site for community involvement in park improvement, since there are a number of social service, church organizations, and schools in the immediate vicinity. One immediate project that might be considered would be the daylighting and restoration of Sausal Creek. The creek could potentially become a wonderful park amenity, as well as an opportunity for nature study by the nearby schools.

Allendale. This popular neighborhood park would benefit from modernization and possible redesign of the recreation center. Its design should improve the visibility of the outdoor play areas and parking lot from inside. More efficient utilization of space would also be helpful, since there are so many diverse activities going on at one time within the center. Allendale would also benefit from updated children's play equipment.

The park is a good example of a "neighborhood"-serving park and succeeds in part because of neighborhood watch efforts and the extensive use of the park by local residents.

Foothill Meadows/ Foothill Meadows Annex. This neighborhood park needs security and maintenance improvements. Considering the lack of open space in the neighborhood, it is not used nearly as much as it could be.

A community-oriented planning program would be helpful to explore options for making the park safer and introducing new activities. Possibilities might include removing the picnic rotunda, slowing traffic along Foothill Boulevard and improving the crosswalk, creating a community garden, improving pedestrian circulation and lighting within the park, resurfacing the basketball court and maybe adding a spectator area, and clearing out and restoring Peralta Creek. The park's tot lot was recently upgraded with a grant from an anonymous donor.

The nearby Foothill Meadows annex site (a small mini-park) is also in need of maintenance and security improvements.

Kennedy Tract Park. The park is currently occupied by portable classrooms and is not in use. A long-term replacement site is needed.

Lazear Tot Lot. This mini-park should be relocated to a more hospitable site, preferably adjacent to the school property on 29th Avenue. The existing site under the 29th Avenue overpass is difficult to reach and provides a less than suitable environment for small children.

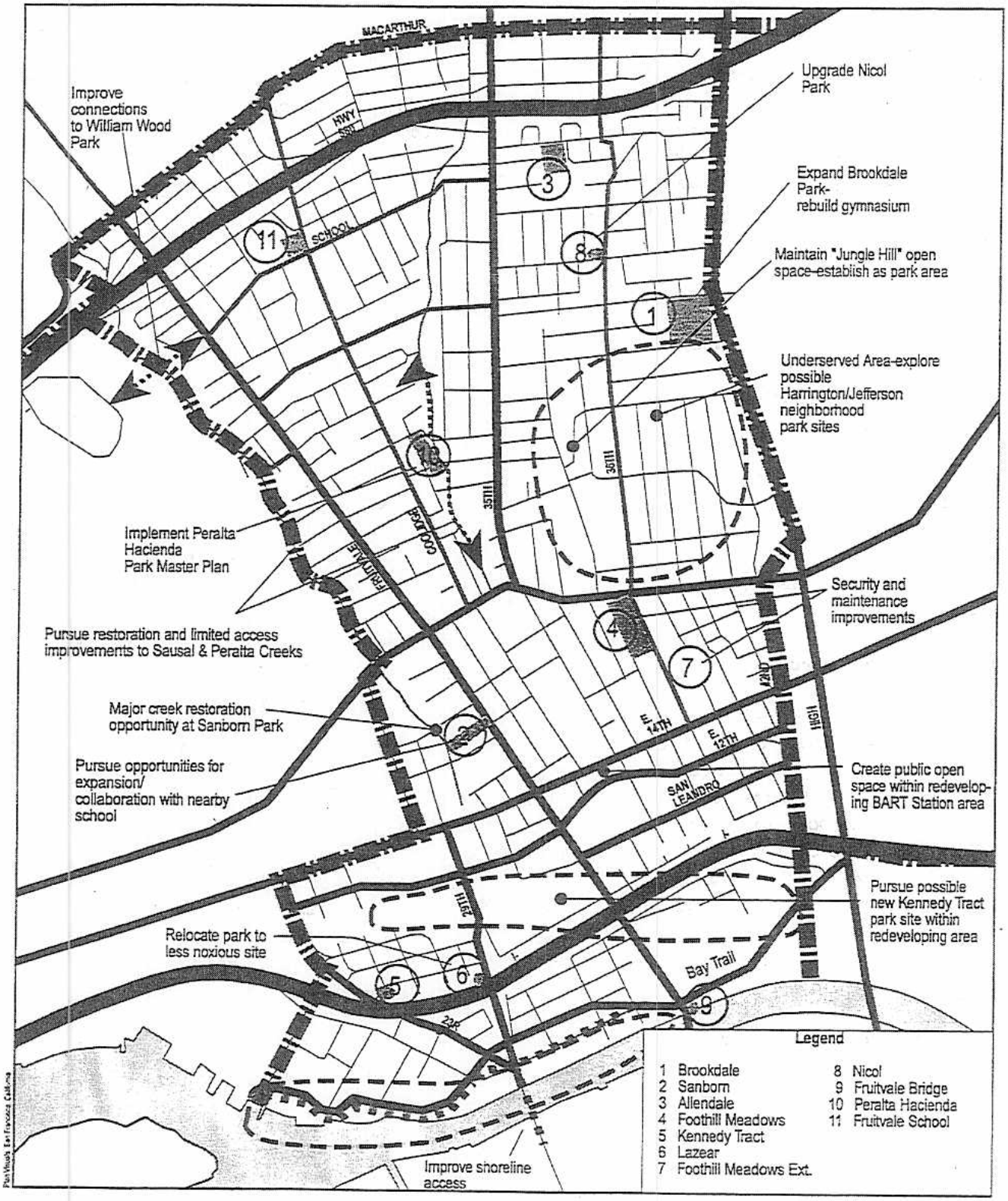
Nicol. This mini-park is in need of maintenance and renovation. As the site was initially a land trust park, community involvement should be solicited in regular maintenance. Community gardening could also be explored here.

Fruitvale Bridge. The pier is attractive and in good condition but is difficult to find. Ultimately, it should be linked to the Bay Trail, with connections to Martin Luther King Jr Regional Shoreline on the east and Embarcadero Cove on the west.

Peralta Hacienda. This historic park centered around the home of Antonio Maria Peralta is being developed in phases according to an overall master plan prepared in the 1970s. Phase One included a picnic area, lawn, and trail along Peralta Creek, as well as street closures and the conversion of the Peralta House to a community meeting place. Phase Two will expand the park west to Coolidge, reconstruct the garden and adobe walls, and provide off-street parking.

There are also plans to create a children's play area. In siting such uses, care should be taken to respect the historic character of the property and maintain its overall integrity. The passive character of the park, particularly the densely wooded area along the creek, should be retained.

Other improvements should include an improved street crossing at Davis Street, better lighting and other security



City of Oakland
General Plan Element
Figure 24: Fruitvale Major Recommendations
Source: Oakland Office of Planning & Building, 1995

CENTRAL EAST OAKLAND

Central East Oakland encompasses 2,870 acres and has a population of about 47,000. The area includes four neighborhood parks, one athletic field park, a swimming pool, and a linear park now under construction. One of the parks includes a recreation center. Central East Oakland's parks are supplemented by schoolyards at nine elementary schools, two junior high schools, and one high school.

Adding schoolyard and park areas, the District has 41.7 acres of recreational land. This equates to 0.89 acres per 1,000 residents, which is about one fifth the standard previously adopted by the City. Central East Oakland actually has more acreage in asphalt schoolyards (22.1 Ac) than it does in traditional parks (19.6 Ac). More effective use of the schoolyards could help address some of the great recreational deficiencies in the neighborhoods.

Figure 25 summarizes open space and park recommendations.

Open Space Recommendations

Although there are nearly 400 acres of open space in Central East Oakland, very little of this land is recreational in nature. Large, freestanding parking lots encompass nearly 100 acres and another 120 acres consists of wooded open space around Mills College. There are large vacant lots in the hilly Millsmont area and in the industrial area along San Leandro Street. Some of these sites may have the potential to become neighborhood parks. The Planning Area also contains a number of creeks which could provide a framework for linear parks or trails.

Central East Oakland is relatively close to large open spaces along San Leandro Bay and in the South Oakland Hills. However, access to these areas is difficult without a car. Better access through transit, bike lanes and pedestrian trails or walkways would relieve some of the shortage of parkland in the area.

As in other parts of the city, Central East Oakland would also benefit from improvements to schoolyards. With the exception of Fremont High School, all of the yards are asphalt. Many provide the only public recreation areas in their vicinities and others are adjacent to parks and have significant potential for enhancement.

To the extent permitted by law, specific recommendations are presented below:

- ✓ Maintain creekside vegetation, reduce erosion and illegal dumping, and explore opportunities for public access along Courtland Creek, Seminary Creek, and Lion Creek. Below MacArthur Boulevard, the creeks are among the only remaining natural features in the area. Lion Creek in particular may provide an opportunity to link the Coliseum area with the shoreline.

- ✓ Create a stronger connection between Central East Oakland and Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline. Presently, the only link is the 66th Avenue overpass. Signage and access improvements to King Shoreline are needed, particularly between Curt Flood Field and the Lockwood Gardens/ Coliseum Gardens neighborhoods. Access improvements could include provisions for pedestrians and bicycles on the 66th Avenue bridge and a linear trail along Lion Creek/Arroyo Viejo.

- ✓ Include provisions for a public plaza in any redevelopment plan or urban design plan for the Coliseum BART Station. The overall appearance and design character of the BART to Coliseum walkway should be improved.

- ✓ Consider ways to better integrate the Havenscourt Junior High/ Lockwood Elementary Schoolyards with Greenman Field, possibly creating the equivalent of a community park. This could involve a cooperative effort with the Oakland Unified School District to partially "green" the 3-acre asphalt schoolyard or to create additional recreational facilities to supplement the athletic fields.

- ✓ Consider ways to enhance the appearance of other asphalt schoolyards in the area, particularly Melrose and Horace Mann Elementary Schools (which are located in the most park-deficient parts of the Area).

- ✓ Improve the appearance of the Coliseum parking lot. While recreational potential may be limited, the lot could potentially be made more of an amenity with trees, landscaping, access to Arroyo Viejo Creek, and other attractions.

- ✓ Retain the wooded character of the Mills College border along MacArthur Boulevard and Seminary Avenue. The dense vegetation creates an attractive edge to the Millsmont and Maxwell Park neighborhoods.

- ✓ Due to the significant shortage of parkland in the area, include a park component which considers existing deficiencies in any major redevelopment project.

- ✓ Promote improvements to the overall visual quality of Central East Oakland through street tree planting.

Park Recommendations

When Central East Oakland was developed in the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s, inadequate provisions were made for parks and open space. As recently as 20 years ago, the area only had one sizeable park, and it was used exclusively for ballgames. Although several parks were created in Central East Oakland during the 1970s and 1980s, the area is still grossly deficient both in terms of acreage and facilities.

Central East Oakland still lacks a community-serving park. Most of its neighborhood parks are smaller than three acres and are not capable of supporting a full array of recreation activities. Some have been impacted by vandalism and safety problems and are not as heavily used as they could be.

At the present time, the Melrose and Fairfax areas lack neighborhood parks altogether and must rely on schoolyards for recreation. Melrose includes a number of open storage yards and underutilized industrial properties which could potentially support neighborhood parks; Fairfax is more intensively developed and has less vacant land. The Millsmont area (above MacArthur Boulevard) also lacks a neighborhood park, although the shortage is offset somewhat by private yards, greater access to the hill area open spaces, and proximity to Burkhalter Park in Elmhurst.

Specific recommendations for Central East Oakland's parks are laid out below. OSCAR Technical Report Volume 2 (Chapter 4) should be consulted for a comprehensive assessment of each park and more specific recommendations.

Rainbow Recreation Center. The park provides the only active recreation site in a large area with very little access to open space. Although it works relatively well, its small size and landlocked location limit its future use and service area. The following specific changes could improve the park's ability to meet local needs:

- redesign the lawn and play areas to make them more inviting, attractive, and visible from the perimeter of the park;

- update the children's play equipment, which is now minimal and outdated;

- improve clean-up, maintenance, and security (including better early evening lighting);

- expand the use of the facility for community events;

- improve awareness of the park's presence, including making the sign (now obscured by shrubs) more prominent and making the park's facilities (which are mostly located on the interior of the block) more visible from East 14th and Seminary;

- capitalize on Seminary Creek as an asset, possibly doing a creek restoration project on-site and cracking down on illegal dumping; and

- expand the park as funding allows, and opportunities arise.

Concordia Park. This is a relatively new park which was formerly part of Concordia College. While the park has good visibility, signage is inadequate and the site's

function as a neighborhood park is unclear. Concordia is a good candidate for ballfield renovation, tot lot improvement, and community involvement in park planning and clean-up.

Maxwell Park. This former residential estate provides the only wooded open space in the Maxwell Park neighborhood. It would benefit from better signage, landscape improvements, and renovation of the restrooms and children's play area.

Coliseum Gardens Park. This neighborhood park created in the 1980s is a major opportunity site that has suffered as a result of vandalism and disinvestment. It is one of the largest parks in East Oakland and serves an area with an exceptionally high need for recreational improvements. More than 500 units of public housing are located within three blocks of the site. Redesign of the park with assistance from the community is necessary. The redesign could incorporate security improvements, new uses like community gardening, and possibly a recreation center partially funded by HUD or another federal agency serving the needs of very low income households. Because the site is the closest city park to the Oakland Coliseum, a collaborative effort with the Oakland Athletics or Raiders also might be pursued. The park is also very close to BART, and could be tied into a plan to revitalize the area around the BART Station. There is also an opportunity to restore Lion Creek, which currently traverses the site in a flood control channel.

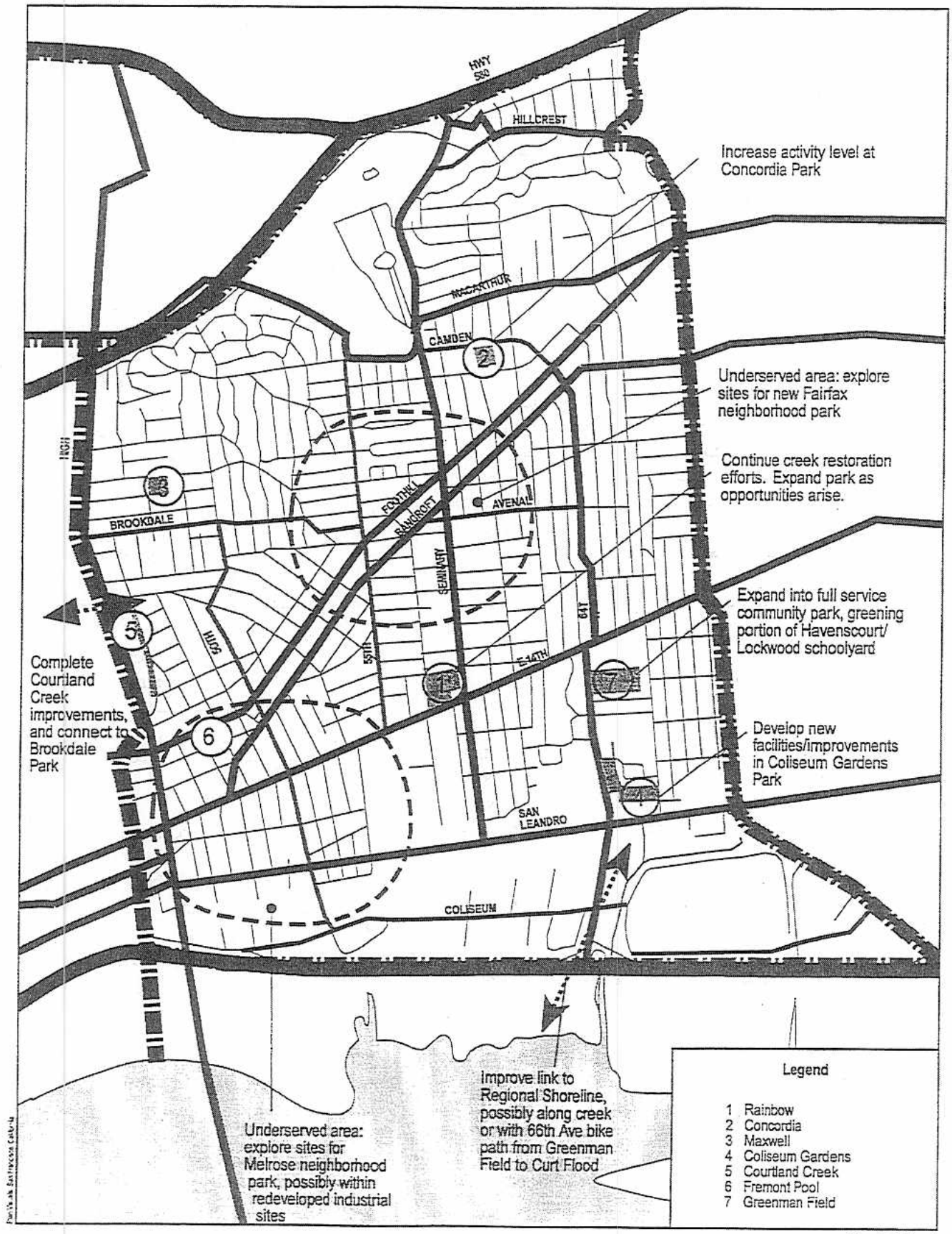
Courtland Creek. This linear park is presently under construction and should be completed according to its adopted master plan. An eventual connection to Brookdale Park should be pursued.

Fremont Pool. The pool provides the only swimming site in Central East Oakland and Elmhurst. It should be maintained and renovated as funding permits. An additional pool site is needed to serve the Elmhurst district and prevent overuse of this facility.

Greenman Field. This athletic field complex is the most heavily used park in Central East Oakland. Renovation of the ballfields has been funded through Measure K and should be underway shortly.

Despite heavy use, there are a number of areas within Greenman Field that are dormant at this time. As mentioned above, the adjoining Lockwood and Havenscourt schoolyards also could be better integrated with the ballfields, enabling Greenman to become a full-service community park comparable to DeFremery or Mosswood in its amenities. This would require a collaborative effort with the school district, additional funding, and extensive input from the community. Partial daylighting and restoration of Lion Creek could also be possible in some locations.

A master plan for Greenman Field should be prepared during the next five years to explore these possibilities. Development of the site as a community park could substantially reduce the shortage of recreational facilities in this area.



City of Oakland
Open Space, Conservation, & Recreation Element
Figure 25: Central East Oakland Major Recommendations
Source: Oakland Office of Planning & Building, 1995

ELMHURST

The Elmhurst District encompasses 3,871 acres and has a population of about 57,700. The area contains two community parks, seven neighborhood parks, four active mini-parks, and one natural resource area. There are also several athletic field complexes -- some on city property and others on school property. Five of the Elmhurst area parks contain recreation centers. The parks are supplemented by schoolyards and playgrounds at 14 public schools.

Total park area, including the athletic fields and schoolyards, is 174.9 acres. Subtracting the Glenn Daniel/ King Estate Natural Area, which is a large passive open space rather than an active recreational area, leaves 99.9 acres of "local-serving" acreage. This equates to 1.73 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, which is less than half the standard adopted by the City.

Figure 26 summarizes open space and park recommendations.

Open Space Recommendations

Elmhurst is the largest of the seven "flatland" planning districts and has the greatest variety among these districts in its natural features, open space, and overall land use mix. Elmhurst includes the wooded canyon of Arroyo Viejo, the open knoll of Glenn Daniel/ King Estate, truck farms and nurseries along San Leandro Creek, and a considerable amount of vacant industrial property. Elmhurst is also close to the regional open spaces along San Leandro Bay and the South Hills, although topography, freeways, and other barriers create the perception that these areas are further away than they actually are.

Nearly 12 percent of Elmhurst (441 acres) consists of open space. Only a third of this area consists of city parks; the rest consists of schoolyards or private land, or is used for functional purposes, like water storage, power transmission, or freeway buffering. The value of the functional open space might be enhanced in the future, with landscaping and access provided as opportunities arise. Some of these areas could potentially become open space connectors between Elmhurst and nearby regional parks.

The Elmhurst area contains a large number of scattered infill sites, especially along the major thoroughfares like MacArthur, East 14th, and Bancroft. Some of these sites provide opportunities for small parks, either in their entirety or as parts of larger developments. Closer to the Nimitz Freeway, Elmhurst contains some of Oakland's largest vacant properties, providing major opportunities for mixed use redevelopment. Given the unmet recreational needs in the area, parks should be included as the area redevelops.

School grounds occupy about 68 acres in Elmhurst, the highest acreage in this use category among the twelve planning areas. This is a function of the large number of schools in the area (14) and the fact that the school grounds themselves tend to be newer and larger. Although Elmhurst area schools tend to be "greener" than their counterparts in other flatland neighborhoods, some could use aesthetic improvements and be better used to offset local shortages of parkland.

To the extent permitted by law, specific recommendations are laid out below:

- ✓ Incorporate a neighborhood park or special recreational use as one component of the redevelopment plan for the Imo Delaval Engine Plant on 85th and Edes Avenues.

- ✓ Extend the existing San Leandro Creek trail from Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline to the Columbian Gardens and Sobrante Park neighborhoods. The trail should continue from its current terminus to 98th Avenue, and should eventually be linked to Columbian Gardens Park and Brookfield Park.

- ✓ Create better connections between Elmhurst and the large parks on the east side of Interstate 580 (Knowland and Lake Chabot). One possibility

would be a creek trail along Arroyo Viejo from MacArthur to Golf Links Road.

- √ Improve landscaping on the Bancroft Avenue median and consider developing a Bancroft bike trail from Eastmont Mall to the San Leandro city limits.

- √ Establish a community garden site in the neighborhood. Opportunities within existing parks and on vacant city-owned infill sites should be explored.

- √ Pursue new neighborhood park sites or improve the schoolyards in areas which are currently deficient. These areas include: (a) Las Palmas-Durant Manor-Iveywood; (b) Fitchburg-Woodland; © Toler Heights; and (d) Highland/ Elmhurst Park. Schools in these areas currently provide the only sites for public recreation.

- √ Consider ways to take advantage of the functional open spaces in Elmhurst, including the PG&E and CalTrans rights of way, and the 21-acre wooded EBMUD Reservoir site on Seneca Street.

- √ Maintain the open character of the 75-acre Glenn Daniel/ King Estate tract, incorporating trails which connect the flatlands and hills. A future connection to the Naval Hospital site would be helpful as the hospital is redeveloped.

- √ Continue street tree planting and other efforts to "green" Elmhurst.

Park Recommendations

The Elmhurst area contains two community-serving parks -- Brookfield and Arroyo Viejo. These large, attractive parks each provide a good complement of recreational facilities and serve the surrounding areas well. The neighborhood and mini-parks include a mix of facilities that date back to the area's initial development in the 1930s and 1940s, and newer facilities that resulted from urban renewal in the 1970s. Several of Elmhurst's parks are located adjacent to schools, allowing the joint use of park and school grounds.

Safety and crime problems have taken a heavy toll on Elmhurst area parks and have hampered their ability to serve the community. Security improvements are the clear priority in most of the existing parks. A variety of measures have been proposed in the OSCAR Element to make parks throughout Oakland safer and less prone to vandalism.

While security is a priority, there are some parts of Elmhurst that lack neighborhood parks altogether. Arroyo Viejo and Tassafaronga (85th Avenue) both serve very large areas and would benefit from additional neighborhood-scale parks in their vicinities. Opportunities may exist along East 14th and on some of the vacant industrial sites in the San Leandro Street Corridor. Some potential for new parks may exist along MacArthur Boulevard, possibly through the reuse of old motel sites.

Specific recommendations for Elmhurst parks are laid out below. OSCAR Technical Report Volume 2 (Chapter 4) should be consulted for a comprehensive assessment of each park and more specific recommendations.

Arroyo Viejo. A master plan should be prepared for Arroyo Viejo. The park has been the recreational focal point for East Oakland for nearly 60 years. However, it is not living up to its full potential, considering the very large area it serves and the range of facilities it offers. A master planning process could solicit community input and reshape Arroyo Viejo into a park which is more inviting, accessible, visible, and useful.

Specific recommendations to be considered in a master plan are laid out below.

- Improve the park's visibility. At minimum, this could entail better signage on Bancroft and 73rd Avenues. Other measures could include expanding the park to create an "outlet" to Bancroft or landscaped connection to Eastmont Mall.

- Restore the creek. A number of community-based efforts are underway to restore Arroyo Viejo. The creek should be capitalized upon as a park amenity. A trail connection to Bancroft (and possibly beyond) might be possible in the future.

- Improve security. Probably the greatest deterrent to the use of Arroyo Viejo is security. A combination of measures (evening lighting, park curfew enforcement, more programmed activities, more varied uses, greater ranger presence, neighborhood watch, etc.) should be considered. More supervision is needed on the weekends, including staffing of the recreation center.

- Develop the park as a community focal point. Arroyo Viejo should be a center for neighborhood fairs and festivals, special events, and performances.

- Replace dated children's play equipment, worn out turf, and vandalized ballfield lights.

- Improve connections between the park and Webster Academy.

- Consider creating an area where dogs are permitted.

- Due to the park's large size and the great need for recreational facilities in the area, consider developing new uses such as a swimming pool or arts and crafts center (comparable to Studio One).

Brookfield. This large community park has benefitted greatly from the construction of a new recreation center and gymnasium. The surrounding park grounds work fairly well. Maintenance and security should remain priorities.

Tassafaronga. "Tassa" is located in an area with very high needs and limited access to private recreation or backyards. A new gymnasium was recently constructed in the park with Measure K funds. The old gym will be demolished, and the vacated site should be used to replace the basketball courts displaced by the new building. The park has other maintenance and rehabilitation needs which should be addressed. These include new turf on the ballfield and replacement of irrigation systems, corrective drainage measures, updating of the children's play area, resurfacing of various hard courts, and some renovation of the recreation center.

Verdese Carter. Verdese Carter Park is currently being renovated. The park would benefit from landscaping improvements, a tie-in to a bike trail along Bancroft, and additional security provisions around the recreation center.

Burkhalter. Burkhalter needs general maintenance, security, and rehabilitation improvements. Functionally, the park works well, although most of the facilities (tennis, etc.) are not visible from the street. Additional off-street parking would be helpful given the park's proximity to the freeway and high patronage by persons from other Oakland neighborhoods. Picnic, bathroom, and ballfield areas are all in need of upgrading.

Elmhurst Plaza. The age of this park (1916), formal layout, and mature vegetation give it a more urban feel than most of the area's parks. Elmhurst Plaza functions fairly well but is quite crowded with recreational facilities. At the same time, it appears to be underutilized. Expansion of the park site would be beneficial and might be possible since there are a number of abandoned buildings in the vicinity.

Columbian Gardens. This park makes effective use of a transmission line right of way through a residential area without other recreational amenities. Maintenance and rehabilitation of the facilities are needed. Opportunities for access to San Leandro Creek, which is now completely fenced off at the back of the park, should be explored.

Stonehurst. Stonehurst Park has very poor visibility and is not even recognized as a park by many local residents. The sign is completely obscured by shrubs, and the park is generally regarded as belonging to the adjacent elementary school. A school/park master plan would be very helpful here, with the goal of bringing some of the hidden park facilities (children's play area, etc.) closer to E Street, creating park visibility from San Leandro Street, and better integrating the park with the adjacent Stonehurst neighborhood.

Sobrante. Like Stonehurst, this park has poor visibility and is usually thought of as part of the nearby Elementary and Junior High School complex. The park is difficult to find, and the facilities are not clearly visible from the street. Facilities are in below average condition. As one of the largest open spaces in the Elmhurst area, the park and adjoining football field are a major untapped

resource. While the mix of recreational uses works well, better access, signage, and public information would help make this park more successful.

Tyrone Carney. This mini-park currently has security problems that reduce its use for legitimate purposes. It would benefit from a community-led, city-supported effort to rethink the park's function and explore ways it could be made more secure or even relocated. The possibility of adding ornamental fencing around the site or introducing new uses such as community gardening should be considered.

Eula M Brinson/ 88th Avenue Mini-Parks. Both parks would benefit from landscape improvements and better security. Fencing and gates could help secure both sites and improve their usefulness for neighborhood children and families. The play apparatus at Eula Brinson Park was recently updated but the 88th Avenue Park still requires new equipment.

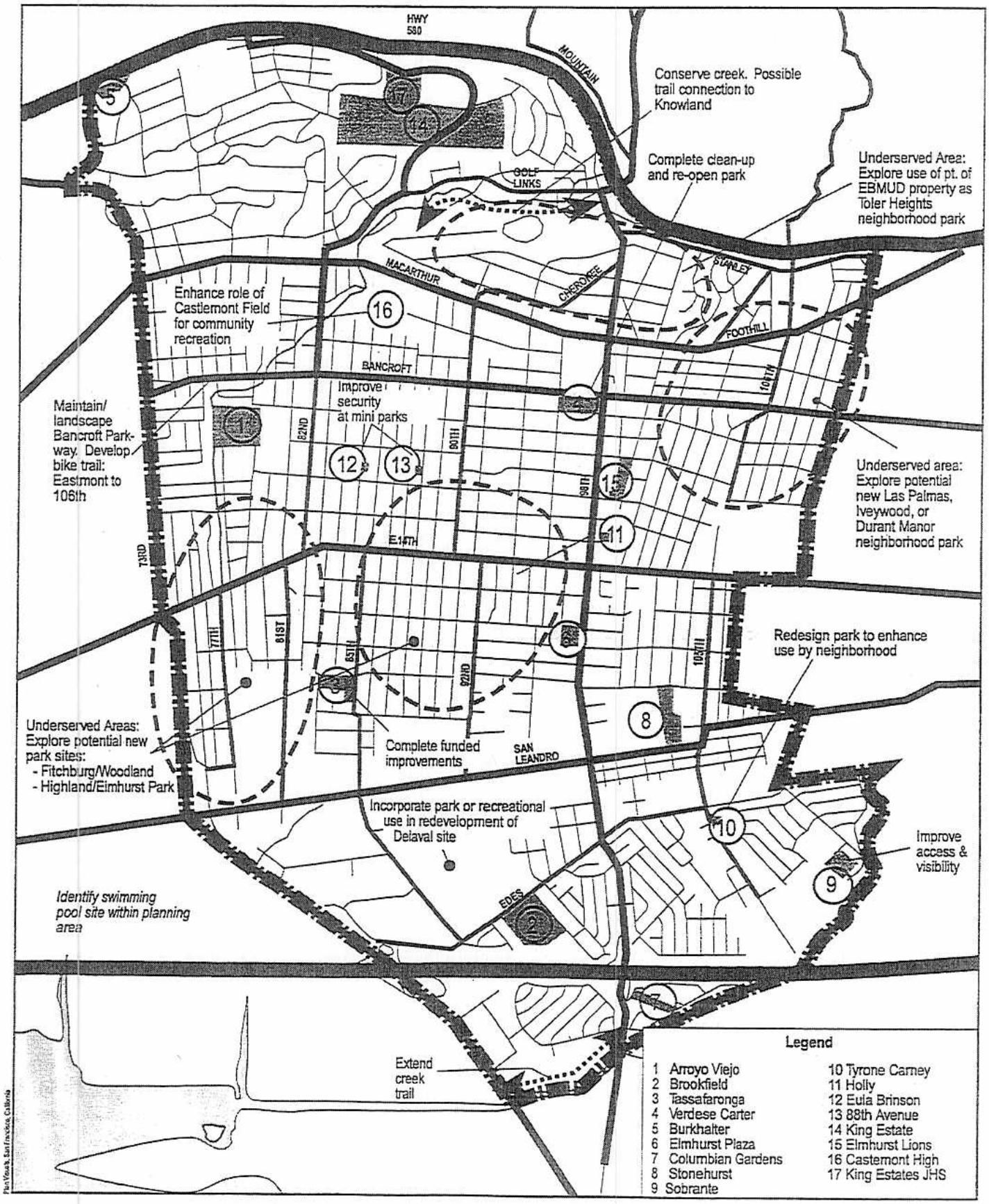
Glenn Daniel/ King Estate. Excluding Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline, this is the largest open space in Oakland below the MacArthur Freeway. The development of active facilities on the 75-acre site is constrained by steep topography, sensitive ecological features, a history of landslides, and proximity to the Hayward Fault. To the extent feasible and legally permissible, the site's role as a passive open space should be retained in the future. A park master plan which implements this vision has recently been prepared.

On the other hand, Glenn Daniel/ King Estate is also an important open space link between the flatland neighborhoods and the South Oakland Hills. Better trail access to and across the site would be helpful. Picnic areas and interpretive nature facilities might be developed, and improved connections might be established to the existing ballfields behind King Estate Junior High.

Elmhurst Lions. This junior high school athletic field would benefit from general maintenance and clean-up, as well as the construction of bleachers. Night lighting does not appear feasible at this time due to the proximity of nearby residences and lack of landscape screening.

Castlemont High. Castlemont's football field and track are a recreational resource for the surrounding community but are generally not used for city-programmed activities. Continued maintenance of the field is recommended and additional public use of the field might be considered sometime in the future. Restoration of Arroyo Viejo Creek on the Castlemont property should be encouraged.

King Estate Junior High. This school athletic field accommodates a limited amount of City OPR activities. The field was recently renovated with the help of Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation. Continued turf maintenance is recommended.



City of Oakland

Open Space, Conservation, & Recreation Element

Figure 26: Elmhurst Major Recommendations

Source: Oakland Office of Planning & Building, 1995

LOWER HILLS

The Lower Hills encompass 2,467 acres and have a population of about 36,500. The area contains one community park, two neighborhood parks, one passive mini-park, and three special use parks. Two of the parks contain recreation centers.

Total park area, including about 13 acres in school playgrounds at seven elementary and two middle schools, is 48.9 acres. Excluding Davie Tennis Stadium, which is actually outside the City limits, park area is about 44 acres. This equates to 1.20 acres of local-serving parkland per 1,000 residents, which is well below the adopted standard.

Figure 27 summarizes open space and park recommendations.

Open Space Recommendations

The Lower Hills occupies a critical position between the dense Central, San Antonio, and Fruitvale Districts on one side and the suburban hill areas on the other. There may be opportunities to link the denser neighborhoods on the south to the less dense areas on the north. The canyons and creeks provide the most logical physical linkage, but bike trails along local streets may be more practical in some cases.

The Lower Hills neighborhoods are nearly completely built out, with very little open space (just over 100 acres). Most of the open space that does exist is steep and wooded and is contained in private yards. The potential for new parks is limited. Most of the opportunities lie in the wooded area along Upper Peralta Creek, on "functional" sites like the EBMUD covered reservoirs and freeway buffers, and on a handful of infill lots in neighborhood commercial districts. As in other areas of Oakland, most of the schoolyards are publicly accessible but consist of asphalt play surfaces.

The lack of open space in the Lower Hills is offset somewhat by its proximity to Lake Merritt and to the large parks in the North and South Oakland Hills. Some of the area has access to private greenbelts and many of the homes have large backyards. At the same time, parts of the Lower Hills are very dense and do not have adequate access to open space. Improvements would be beneficial in a number of areas, highlighted below:

- √ Conserve riparian vegetation and maintain setbacks along Sausal and Peralta Creeks.
- √ Explore trail access or easement acquisition along Peralta Creek from Wisconsin Street to Monterey Boulevard, providing a connection from the Laurel District to the only natural open space in the area.
- √ Pursue the long-term extension of the existing Sausal Creek (Dimond Canyon) trail from Dimond Park to MacArthur, either via the creek or along local streets. A link across I-580 to William Wood Park should eventually be created.
- √ Enhance the visual quality of the medians and traffic islands on Park Blvd, High Street, and 35th Avenue. Community-led efforts to beautify, clean up, and maintain these areas should be supported.
- √ Retain the wooded edges along Highways 580 and 13 to screen adjacent residential neighborhoods and maintain the high visual quality of the freeways.
- √ Work with EBMUD to explore access improvements to the 8-acre wooded open space surrounding the 39th Ave reservoir, including the possibility of community gardening in this area.
- √ Improve the appearance of the area's schoolyards, particularly at schools in areas without access to local parks and open spaces.
- √ Retain wooded areas on the area's institutional uses (Altenheim Retirement Home, Fred Finch Youth Center, Lincoln Child Center Foundation, Cerebral Palsy Foundation Center, etc.) if any should become available for redevelopment in the future. In such cases, use of these areas as neighborhood parks

should be considered where existing parks do not exist.

Park Recommendations

The Lower Hills contain some of Oakland's best known and most successful parks. Because the area contains a wider variety of terrain and vegetation than the nearby flatlands, its parks tend to be heavily used by patrons from other neighborhoods. Both Dimond and Redwood Heights Parks serve very large geographic areas, despite the fact that comparable facilities are available elsewhere in those areas. The varying terrain and woodlands also have contributed to the development of several special use parks in the area, including the Morcom Rose Garden, Davie Tennis Stadium, and the McCrea Trout Ponds.

There is a shortage of neighborhood-oriented parkland in the Lower Hills. This is particularly noticeable in the Laurel and Grand Lake neighborhoods but is also true in Glenview, Trestle Glen, and around the Rose Garden. The small neighborhood park in Avenue Terrace provides a model that might be copied in these neighborhoods, but high land costs and the lack of vacant land limit the options.

Specific recommendations for Lower Hills parks are laid out below. OSCAR Technical Report Volume 2 (Chapter 4) should be consulted for a comprehensive assessment of each park and more specific recommendations.

Dimond. A master plan for Dimond Park should be prepared. While the park's layout is functional, there are compatibility problems between park activities and the surrounding residential area. Neighborhood concerns about park security and noise levels should be addressed through more visible ranger presence, stronger enforcement of ordinances and regulations, parking gates, and better lighting. The following additional recommendations should be considered in the park plan:

- Maintain the park's lush, wooded character and maintain Sausal Creek as a park amenity. The "Dimond Oak" should be designated as a local historic landmark.
- Create a clear main entrance or park gateway. Because Dimond Park does not front on a major street, access to the park is confusing. There is a formal pedestrian gateway on Fruitvale Avenue, but most vehicle traffic enters on El Centro or Dimond Avenues.
- Rehabilitate park infrastructure and older buildings. This could include restrooms, the basketball courts (in need of resurfacing), and the recreation center.
- Improve lighting around the recreation center and in the parking lots.
- Establish a stronger connection between the isolated play area on Fruitvale Avenue and the rest of the park. Also, establish better connections between the Glenview and Dimond commercial areas and the park.
- Develop a long-term solution to parking problems. This might include gated parking in the lower portion of the park and adding a security gate at the Wellington Avenue parking lot.
- Limit the number of additional uses in the park due to existing heavy use and high demand. New uses should be of relatively low intensity, such as a sand volleyball court.

Redwood Heights. The new recreation center, constructed with voter-approved funds from Measure AA, has become a popular addition to the park and has increased the park's use by community groups and local residents. Although the siting of the building has prevented the park's use for league ballgames, the lawn is still popular for casual play. The park would benefit from a number of additional improvements, including updating of the old swings and climbing structure near the parking lot and renovation of the old recreation center building. The southeast corner of the park (the picnic area) could also be better integrated with the rest of the park. The park could also use speed control and a guard rail along Redwood Road for traffic safety.

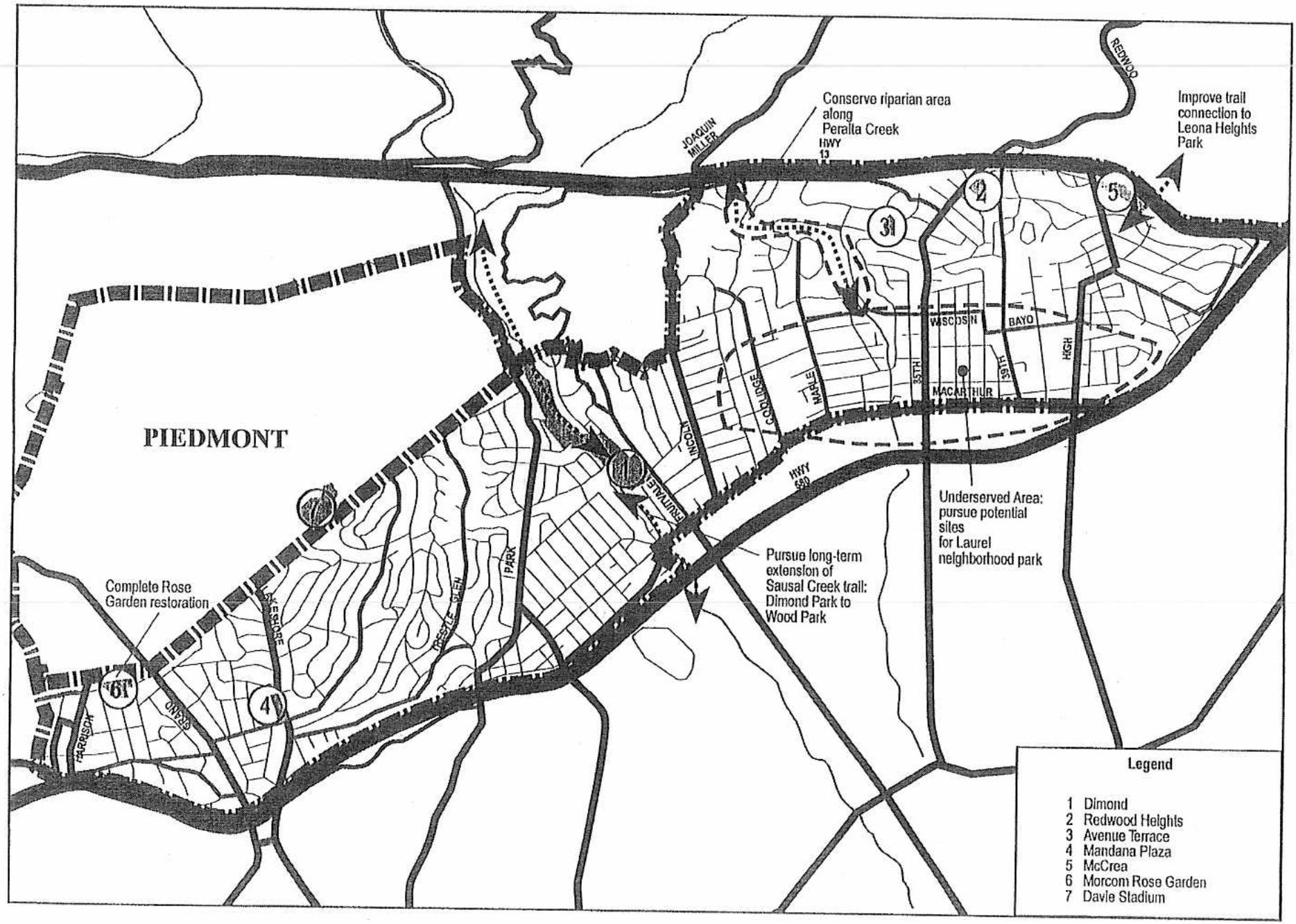
Avenue Terrace. Although Avenue Terrace is much smaller than a "standard" neighborhood park, it fits very well into the fabric of the surrounding neighborhood and requires very little change.

Mandana Plaza. This passive open space provides a visual amenity for the Grand Lakeshore neighborhood and works fairly well in its current configuration. On-going maintenance and landscaping should be encouraged. Due to the small size and narrow width of the park, more intensive uses of the space are not recommended at this time.

McCrea Park. McCrea provides a one-of-a-kind amenity in Oakland in its two fly-fishing casting ponds and its "learn to fish" trout ponds. The park works well but might benefit from better signage and public information. The continued assistance of the East Bay Youth Conservation Corps and Police Activities League should be supported in the operation and maintenance of the park.

Morcom Rose Garden. The park is currently being renovated using Measure K funding. Following completion of the project, ongoing maintenance and security improvements should be supported.

Davie Stadium. No major changes are recommended at this time.



City of Oakland
Open Space, Conservation, & Recreation Element
Figure 27: Lower Hills Major Recommendations

NORTH HILLS

The North Hills Planning Area encompasses 6,362 acres and has a population of about 26,100. The area contains 19 parks, including several which contain both active recreation and resource conservation areas. Six of the North Hill parks are owned and operated by the Regional Park District; four of these are located mostly outside of Oakland's city limits. The Area has three region-serving parks, one community park, two neighborhood parks, one passive mini-park, one athletic field park, one special use (golf course) park and one linear park. Five additional parks in the North Hills are used exclusively as resource conservation areas and are undeveloped.

Total parkland area in the North Hills is 969.5 acres. The parks are supplemented by more than 5,000 acres of open space in the regional parks just beyond the ridgeline, and over 700 acres of permanent open space on the UC Berkeley Campus. While the figures are impressive, particularly compared to the nearby flatlands, the vast majority of the hill area parks consist of very steeply sloping lands which are undeveloped and are poorly suited for active recreation. Total local-serving park acreage is estimated to be 61 acres, for a ratio of 2.34 acres per 1,000 residents. Although this is among the highest ratios in the city, it is still about 60 percent of the adopted standard.

Figure 28 summarizes open space and park recommendations.

Open Space Recommendations

This Planning Area includes the city's steepest slopes and most dramatic terrain as well as some of its largest open spaces. The North Hills contain a complex mix of suburban-density development, hillside open space, and vacant lots in hillside subdivisions. Even many of the developed neighborhoods are heavily wooded and retain a rustic or semi-rural character. About 50 percent of the area consists of open space, including over 2,000 privately-owned vacant lots.

Most of the area was subdivided in the early 1900s in a manner which did not reflect its steep slopes and poor access. As a result, the hills have developed incrementally, with the flattest lots developing first and the steeper lots developing more recently.

While access to open space is excellent for hill area residents, the area presents many open space planning challenges. Foremost among these is the need for vegetation management on the area's 3,000 acres of undeveloped land, a need made very apparent by the 1991 firestorm. Approximately one-quarter of the North Hills Area was destroyed in the 1991 firestorm and is now being rebuilt. Other natural hazards, including landsliding, earthquakes, and erosion, require that the area's open spaces be carefully managed to minimize risks to life and property. North Hills open spaces also contain many of Oakland's special status plant species, much of its remaining wildlife habitat, the headwaters of many of its creeks, and some its most outstanding scenery.

Where compatible with resource conservation goals, access to the area's public open spaces should be improved. This should include better trail connections to the flatlands, as well as trail linkages between the various hill area parks. On the area's private open spaces, a variety of measures should be used to reduce the environmental and visual impacts of future development. In some cases, this could mean public acquisition of land or conservation easements.

To the extent permitted by law, specific recommendations for open space are outlined below *(The Open Space and Conservation sections of the OSCAR Element have additional policies and actions specifically aimed at the hill areas).*

✓ Within the constraints of applicable state and federal laws, explore a range of options for conserving sensitive natural and visual resources on the remaining large private hillside open spaces in the North Hills Area, including Castle Canyon, the Lands of Varney, Caldecott Canyon, and the outparcels between Claremont Canyon and existing city and regional parklands.

- ✓ Maintain a vegetation management program for all North Hill open spaces, focusing on fuel reduction.

- ✓ Develop a Specific Plan for Panoramic Hill which resolves access and infrastructure issues and indicates the maximum number of units that can be built in the area.

- ✓ Work with the University of California in improving trail access and habitat management on those areas designated for ecological study in the UC Berkeley Long Range Development Plan.

- ✓ Improve trail links between hill area parks and the flatlands, including a connection between North Oakland Sports Center, Lake Temescal, Chabot Park, and Rockridge BART; extension of the Shepherd Canyon bike trail up to the ridge and down to Lake Temescal; and better marking and maintenance of the Dimond Canyon Trail.

- ✓ Improve lateral trail connections between hill area open spaces and the hill neighborhoods, using the existing parks (such as Beaconsfield Canyon, Shepherd Canyon, Grizzly Peak Open Space, etc.) as "stepping stones."

- ✓ Maintain (and expand where feasible) the network of mid-block pedestrian paths and stairsteps in the hill neighborhoods.

- ✓ Conduct a more thorough inventory of vacant subdivided hillside lots and determine which have extreme development constraints; explore options for managing these vacant lots in the future.

- ✓ Work with EBMUD to explore opportunities for tot lots, gardens, and other recreational amenities adjacent to the water tanks in the hill areas.

- ✓ Work with PG&E and Caltrans to explore opportunities for trail connections in the rights-of-way in Shepherd and Caldecott Canyons.

- ✓ Retain existing city-owned open space along Skyline Boulevard where development would otherwise block views or change the scenic character of the roadway and neighborhood.

- ✓ Create a resource conservation area on public land around the Caldecott Tunnel and pursue grants for fire-resistant demonstration gardens.

- ✓ Continue creek restoration and erosion control measures on the upper reaches of Claremont, Vicente, Caldecott, Temescal, Sausal, Shepherd, and Palo Seco Creeks.

- ✓ Develop a bike trail on the east shoulder of Park Boulevard between Leimert Avenue and Monterey Boulevard.

Park Recommendations

Although the North Hills have more parks than any other Planning Area, they are still deficient in active recreation sites. It might seem logical to reduce this deficiency by turning some of the area's passive parks into active parks, but this is not feasible in most cases. Most of the area's parks were specifically acquired to preserve environmentally sensitive land. On the other hand, the deficiency *is* offset somewhat by parks like Redwood and Tilden which serve the North Hills as well as the rest of the East Bay. The gap is also offset by large backyards, high mobility, and incomes which permit relatively easy access to other recreational opportunities in Oakland and other parts of the Bay Area.

Most of the ballfields, playgrounds, tennis courts, and other active recreation areas are located in the narrow valley defined by the Hayward Fault and Highway 13. Some of these sites, particularly the North Oakland Sports Center, have the potential for expansion. Higher up in the hills, opportunities are limited by the lack of level ground, poor visibility, and limited road access. Small neighborhood-serving facilities (tot lots, etc.) might be feasible within some of the existing public open spaces, including EBMUD water tank sites and surplus city properties along Skyline.

Specific recommendations for the North Hills parks are laid out below. OSCAR Technical Report Volume 2 (Chapter 4) should be consulted for a comprehensive assessment of each park and more specific recommendations:

Joaquin Miller Park. This is one of the largest and best-known parks in Oakland, providing both active recreation and resource conservation areas. The park is in dire need of a master plan guiding its long-term development and management. New facilities like the relocated observatory (on Skyline) and the community center (on Sanborn) are being constructed without the benefit of an overall plan for the park.

The master plan should clearly define conservation areas and activity areas. The former should be managed for habitat conservation, stream protection, and fire hazard reduction. Trails within these areas should be regularly maintained and clearly marked.

The activity areas require substantial improvement and maintenance, particularly in the Sanborn Drive vicinity. Priorities include restoration of the Woodminster Cascades, which is being coordinated by FOPR and partially funded by Measure K, and general clean-up and refurbishing of the picnic areas, restrooms, and vista points. The Sanborn area would benefit from better signage and orientation markers, "you are here" kiosks, graffiti removal and security lighting, landscaping, and higher prominence of the historic landmarks (Joaquin Miller's Abbey and various monuments). As a region-serving park, the area would also benefit from additional children's play apparatus, particularly in the area adjoining Robin Perry Field.

Better access to the flatlands would also be helpful. The park is already connected by trail to Dimond Park, but the trek is steep, long, and moderately difficult. Better transit service, particularly on weekends, should be pursued. Joaquin Miller Park provides a great opportunity for kids to learn about the natural environment right in their own backyards. New programs for Oakland youth might be added at the equestrian center, the new community center, the ranger station, the archery range, and other facilities within the park.

Temescal Regional Recreation Area. A Land Use and Development Plan for the park was adopted by the Regional Park Board in 1993. The Plan reinforces the park's current function and recommends renovation of the bath house, improvement of the north entrance and parking area, protection of historic structural and landscape features, habitat restoration, interpretive facilities relating to the 1991 firestorm and park geology, new fishing piers and trail links, provisions for disabled access, and possible land transfers which could increase the area of the park by as much as 10 acres. The new plan is consistent with the principles embodied in the OSCAR Element and is supported by the City of Oakland.

Redwood/ Roberts. Only 8 acres of this 2,577-acre regional park actually lie within the Oakland city limits. Redwood Park should continue to be maintained as a natural and scenic area, with no major new facilities added within the City limits. Improved access to the existing facilities at the Canyon Staging Area and Roberts Recreation Area are a primary goal. Better publicity, informational programs, and easier trails would increase access to the park by a broader spectrum of Oakland's population.

Measures to enhance wildlife, restore native habitat, control invasive plants, and protect water quality were all recommended in the park's 1977 Master Plan and continue to be appropriate today. On-going EBRPD efforts to improve the ballfields, children's play area, restrooms, and pool at Roberts Recreation Area are supported by the City of Oakland.

Montclair Park. This very heavily used community park has benefitted from active fundraising, a highly visible and attractive location, and pride of ownership by the surrounding hill neighborhoods. Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation have managed a number of projects in the park during recent years, including some funded by Measure K and others covered by local fundraising. As with other community parks in Oakland, improvements have been made without the benefit of an overall park master plan. A long-range plan for the site is needed.

The following improvements to the park are recommended and should be considered in a master plan:

- Better drainage, erosion control, and bank stabilization are needed on the slopes above the pond to avoid future sedimentation;
- The recreation center (built in the late 1930s) requires seismic upgrading, disabled access

improvements, and general renovation -- additional space is needed for programmed activities;

- A small parking lot would be helpful, possibly on the vacated fire station site nextdoor;
- Traffic control measures are needed for pedestrians crossing Moraga Avenue -- this might involve a crosswalk, a light, or stronger enforcement of posted speed limits;
- Security lighting around the recreation center should be improved;
- The park restrooms require renovation (and possibly relocation to higher ground);
- The opportunity to expand the park northward, to include the fire station, should be pursued. Since the fire station has seismic stability problems, its use for public assembly is limited. However, it might be used for storage or office space. Depending on costs, the building might be relocated, and the area might be used for another recreational use;
- Extension of the Shepherd Canyon bike trail into the park should be pursued. This could entail a bridge across Mountain Boulevard or ramps down to street level and a striped crosswalk. The trail could potentially follow the old railroad trestle to the corner of Thornhill and Moraga, and;
- Conversion of the basketball courts on Mountain Boulevard to commercial parking should be avoided unless a replacement site for the courts is provided elsewhere in the park (possibly on the fire station site).

Shepherd Canyon Park. This park, located in the former right-of-way of a proposed freeway to Moraga, includes a number of different functional areas. The neighborhood-serving facilities, including the junior soccer field, restrooms, and play area, are attractive and fairly well-maintained. Additional off-street parking is needed and the children's play area has some potential for expansion. However, major upgrading of the soccer field (lighting, bleachers, etc.) is not recommended at this time due to the quiet, natural character of the park. Additional use for programmed activities (like volleyball) would be appropriate.

The Shepherd Canyon bicycle trail provides a link between this park and Montclair Village. An extension up to Skyline Drive (and into the regional parks) should be pursued, possibly using surplus State lands or the PG&E right-of-way.

About two-thirds of the park consists of a steeply sloping conservation area. The area is a prime candidate for vegetation management and habitat enhancement. Marked hiking trails through this area to nearby streets in Piedmont Pines would be a good addition and provide better local access to the play area.

Chabot Recreation Area. This neighborhood park serves the Rockridge and Claremont districts of Oakland. It provides a good model for the successful integration of school and park properties, with shared facilities benefitting both students at Chabot School and residents of the surrounding area.

Although the park is popular and well used, it falls short of its full potential. Re-orientation of some of the activities would make the park more functional, visible, and inviting. The remote location of the children's play area, in the "back" of the park and alongside the 24 Freeway, makes it less attractive than it would be if it were closer to Chabot Road. The playground also needs to be updated, with features like the concrete slide replaced with modern play apparatus.

The asphalt areas on both sides of the school could be visually improved and more clearly joined to the park. This could be accomplished by terracing the area between the schoolyard on Patton Street and the existing play area, possibly adding a school vegetable or native plant garden on the terraced area.

The Park would also benefit from the renovation or replacement of the old recreation building, which presently is in poor condition. Finally, signage improvements are needed to identify the site as a park and not just as a school playfield.

Rockridge Boulevard Park. No major changes are required at this landscaped triangle, other than the addition of a small sign indicating that the site is a city park. Continued landscaping and plant care by the surrounding neighborhood should be encouraged.

Ostrander Park. This unimproved park provides an attractive landscaping screen for homes on the north side of Broadway Terrace. While no major changes are recommended, vegetation management is needed to reduce fire hazards. Replacement of invasive plants with California natives should be encouraged. The park also requires an identification sign, as it is currently unmarked. The possibility of a bike lane along Broadway Terrace or additional landscaping on the flatter portions of the park might be explored at some future date.

Montclair Golf Club. The golf club has the potential to be a real amenity for Oakland but is presently operating below its full potential. If the City chooses to retain this facility, consideration should be given to redesigning the golf course. The driving range should be renovated, with junked vehicles and other debris removed from the far end. The 1950s vintage miniature golf course could be updated to today's standards. The concessions building also could use improvement. If the facility is closed, consideration should be given to reusing the site for active recreation, or restoring the riparian canyon that was filled 40 years ago to create the driving range.

Claremont Canyon Regional Park. An EBRPD Master Plan prepared in 1985 guides land use and conservation activities in this 227-acre regional open space. The park has been designated an ecological study area, with ecosystem restoration and on-going vegetation management recommended. The 1985 Plan proposed development of a youth hostel in the park, as well as educational or interpretive exhibits. The hostel is not an active proposal at this time and may be dropped from future master plans due to fire safety and access concerns. Proposals for new trails within the park should continue to be pursued, possibly including a trail along Claremont Creek. The park should provide improved connections between the Claremont Hotel/Clark Kerr Campus area and the regional parks on the east side of the ridge.

Grizzly Peak Open Space. This 58-acre hillside site was acquired in 1992 with Measure K funds for open space preservation. On-going vegetation management is needed to reduce fire hazards. Replacement of invasive (and burned) vegetation with native species is recommended. The park should be linked by trail to nearby Claremont Canyon on the north and the Skyline Regional Trail on the east. This will require acquisition of a trail easement on the property to the south of the park. The feasibility of a trail connection to the North Oakland Sports Center should also be explored.

Robert Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve. Some 57 acres (about 10 percent) of this Regional Park lie within the city limits of Oakland. Due to the area's rugged terrain, high fire hazard, and habitat value, future recreational use of this area should be limited to trails and scenic lookouts or picnic areas along Skyline and Grizzly Peak. Opportunities for trail connections to the Pinehaven and Thorndale neighborhoods, as well as the North Oakland Sports Center, should be pursued. On-going fuel reduction and vegetation management programs are essential.

Dimond Canyon Park. The park consists of the 40-acre canyon along Park Boulevard between Highway 13 and Dimond Park. Trails already exist but need to be better maintained and marked. The Dimond Canyon hiking trail is Oakland's only major trail link between the flatlands and the hills and could be more widely publicized and utilized.

As a relatively wild area surrounded by urban uses, Dimond Canyon needs to be monitored for problems such as illegal camping, burning, and dumping. The canyon requires regular brush removal and vegetation management to reduce fire danger. Clean-up of Sausal Creek and the addition of an interpretive nature trail along the creek would be beneficial. The site's very steep topography limits more intense recreational uses.

Tilden Regional Park. Only 18 acres of this 2,164-acre park are located within the City of Oakland. Continued use of the parcels for resource conservation, vegetation management, and scenic enjoyment is recommended.

Garber Park. This steeply sloping property adjacent to Claremont Avenue would benefit from a park sign, a trail above Claremont Avenue (to Claremont Canyon Regional Park), and a trail connection to the hill neighborhood above the park. The site is too steep to support active recreational facilities.

Beaconsfield Canyon Park. The 5-acre site was specifically acquired to protect a riparian area and natural open space in the Piedmont Pines neighborhood. A small trail will be constructed using a grant from an anonymous donor. The balance of the site should remain passive open space. Vegetation management, trail development, and creek restoration are recommended.

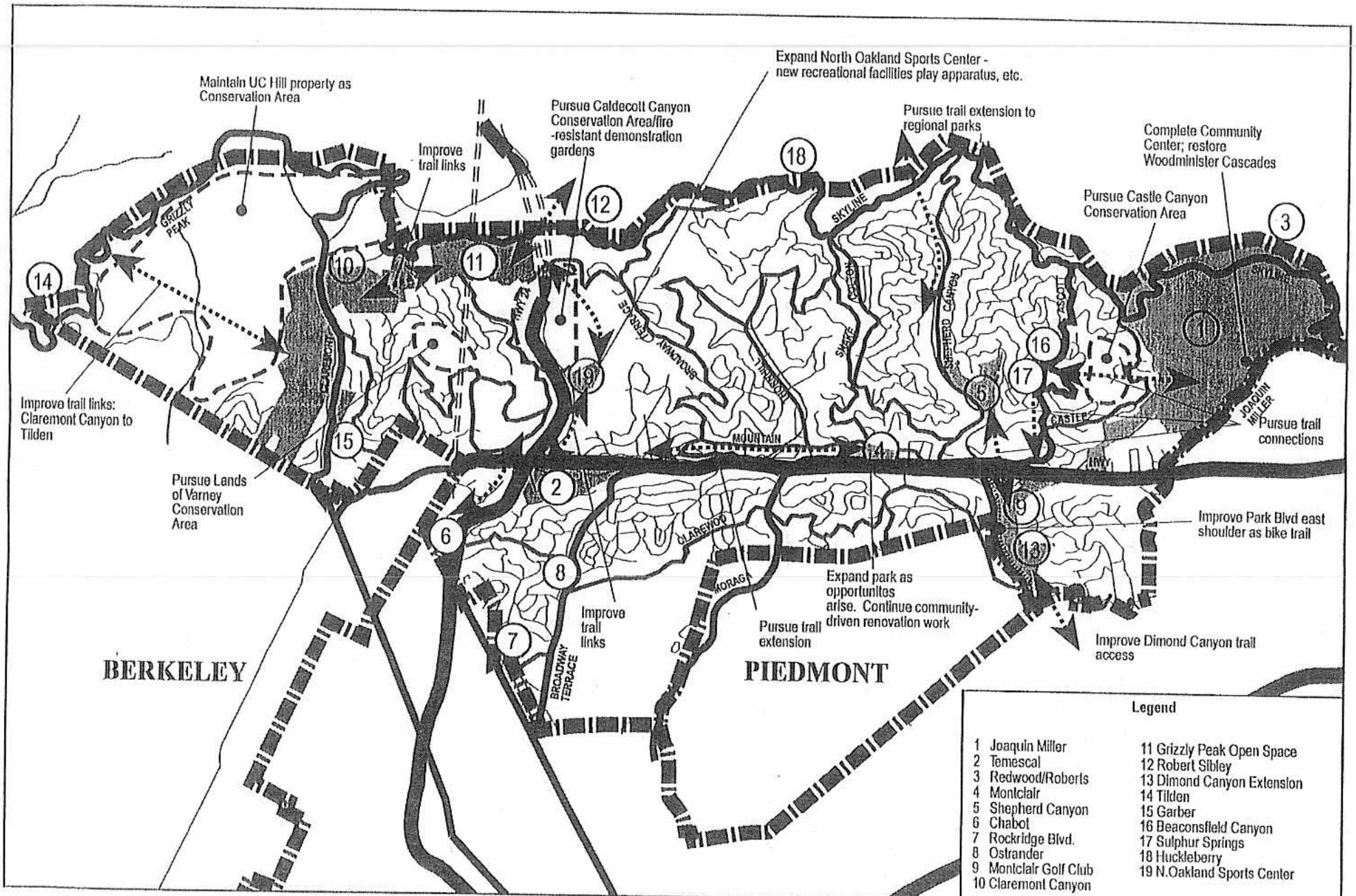
Sulphur Springs Park. This park, best known for its "painted rock" and waterfall at the corner of Ascot and Chelton, is unmarked and improved. Dense vegetation and steep slopes constrain further development. A trail connection (or pedestrian stairsteps) from Ascot to Keswick Court could potentially be developed, with eventual connections uphill to Beaconsfield Canyon and downhill (on city-owned land) to Montera Junior High School.

Huckleberry Botanic Regional Preserve. The park is located outside the City limits but has its only point of road access from Skyline Boulevard in the City of Oakland. Future activities are guided by a 1985 Master Plan prepared by EBRPD. No major changes are proposed at this time.

North Oakland Sports Center. This athletic field complex occupies about 6 acres of a 51-acre parcel owned by the City. The park is one of the few in Oakland with the potential for major new active recreational facilities. A children's play area on the level terrace east of Caldecott Creek would be an appropriate addition, along with new picnic areas. There may also be an opportunity for a trail link up the canyon to Sibley Park and Grizzly Peak Open Space. Additional trail links should be pursued downhill to Lake Temescal and the Rockridge BART area. In programming specific improvements for the park, care should be taken not to duplicate facilities that are already available nearby (at Montclair Park, Lake Temescal, etc.). Care should also be taken not to change the natural character of the park.

To the extent feasible, new facilities in this park should be designed to serve all of North Oakland and the North/ Lower Hills and not just the immediately surrounding neighborhood. This places an imperative on improving visibility and access to the site, as well as public information on the site's availability. Better signage is also needed. The ballfields are good candidates for night lighting given their considerable distance from nearby residences and good transportation access. Any lighting plan would need to mitigate potential impacts on wildlife and residences in the viewshed. More intense use of the site also would require additional off-street parking.

The canyon itself presents an opportunity for habitat restoration, interpretive nature facilities, and educational gardening projects which demonstrate fire-resistant or drought-tolerant landscaping. Because most of the site was burned during the 1991 firestorm, it provides a suitable location for such a project.



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City of Oakland
Open Space, Conservation, & Recreation Element
Figure 28: North Hills Major Recommendations

SOUTH HILLS

The South Hills Planning Area encompasses 5,381 acres and has a population of about 15,100. The area contains 12 parks, most of which contain special uses (like the zoo or golf course) or large resource conservation areas. Three of the parks are operated by the regional park district. The area also contains one athletic field and four schoolyards at public schools.

Total parkland area in the East Hills is 1,207 acres. Despite this impressive total, only 9 acres (3 parks) are in conventional neighborhood-serving parks. The area lacks a community-serving park altogether. The South Hills parks are supplemented by 13 acres of athletic fields and schoolyards on OUSD properties, for a total "local-serving" acreage of 22 acres. This equates to 1.49 acres of local-serving park acres per 1,000 residents, compared to the adopted city standard of 4 acres per 1,000.

Figure 29 summarizes open space and park recommendations.

Open Space Recommendations

The South Hills are characterized by moderately steep hills and canyons, with a mix of suburban development, grassland, brushland, and woodland vegetation. Most of the area's development consists of large-scale hillside subdivisions abutted by open space, estate housing, and parks. About half of the Planning Area consists of undeveloped land.

The sensitive natural resources, environmental hazards, and high visual quality of the South Hills suggest that a large amount of the area's open space will be retained in the future. At this time, only about 40 percent of the area's open space has been set aside as parkland. The rest consists of private properties, institutional uses, golf courses, watershed lands, and functional uses. Some of these areas contain creeks and riparian corridors, oak woodlands and native grasslands, and the habitat of endangered and threatened species. Other areas contain steep slopes and areas of high fire danger. Policies throughout the OSCAR Element address the on-going management of open space to address these concerns.

One important objective in the South Hills is to make the area's open space more accessible to residents of nearby flatland neighborhoods. For the most part, the flatlands lack the spectacular scenery, access to nature, and breathing room of the hill neighborhoods. Although the two areas are relatively close to one another, freeways and topography create major barriers. Trails, transit, and other improvements should provide stronger links and help offset the imbalance.

The South Hills contain a number of specific areas which present important open space opportunities. Policies and actions addressing these areas are contained in the Open Space Land Uses Chapter of OSCAR.

To the extent permitted by law, specific recommendations for open space are outlined below:

- ✓ Work with the East Bay Regional Park District and other agencies to create a Dunsmuir Ridge Resource Conservation Area.

- ✓ Improve trail connections between the area's parks, using the creeks as a trail framework where feasible. Linkages should include a San Leandro Creek connection from Sheffield Village to Lake Chabot, a Rifle Range Creek connection from Leona Open Space to Knowland Park (via the redeveloped Oak Knoll Hospital), and an Arroyo Viejo connection from Upper Knowland Park to the area below I-580.

- ✓ Pursue an open space link between Knowland Park and Dunsmuir Ridge, preferably through a conservation easement across the Lands of Drinnen.

- ✓ Work with the landowner and other parties to maximize open space opportunities in the Redwood Creek area. Create Resource Conservation Areas where legally permissible.

- ✓ Designate the headwaters of Peralta Creek (north of Holy Names College) as a Resource Conservation Area, possibly using a conservation easement to protect the creek and riparian canyon.

- ✓ In accordance with the original plan for Ridgemont, work with the Regional Park District and private landowner to add the west slope of the subdivision to Leona Regional Open Space.

- ✓ Retain open space on the portions of the Oak Knoll Naval Hospital which are greater than 30 percent slope, contain native oak woodlands, or are within the riparian zone along Rifle Range Creek. Consider using the Officer's Club at the Naval Hospital as a recreation center serving the South Hills.

- ✓ Incorporate surplus city-owned property along Golf Links Road into Knowland Park, and update park boundary information on all city maps.

- ✓ Recognize the potential value of the Merritt College parking "plateau" as a community resource and consider ways to enhance its appearance and function.

- ✓ Following the adoption of OSCAR, rezone parks and residential estate properties where appropriate to establish consistency with OSCAR policies and actions.

Park Recommendations

About 75 percent of the parkland in the South Hills consists of undeveloped wildlands with hiking and equestrian trails. The remaining acreage includes the Dunsmuir House and Gardens, Chabot Golf Course, and the Knowland Park Zoo, all special use parks with regional market areas. Neighborhood parks are limited to Pinto Playing Fields, Hellman Park, and Sheffield Village. The area also contains the Chabot Observatory and a City of San Leandro Park which can only be accessed via a bridge on Estudillo Avenue in San Leandro.

As mentioned earlier, the abundance of open space does little to meet the need for active recreational facilities like ballfields and basketball courts. Some of this deficiency is offset by private backyards, as well as the high mobility of the residents compared to residents elsewhere in Oakland. However, some of the area's parks do have the potential for improvement and can go a long way towards reducing local shortages.

Specific recommendations for the South Hills parks are laid out below. OSCAR Technical Report Volume 2 (Chapter 4) should be consulted for a comprehensive assessment of each park and more specific recommendations.

Hellman. This neighborhood park is spacious, attractive and well-maintained, but has poor visibility and access. Better signage and a clearer point of entry are on Malcolm Avenue are needed. Better integration with Marshall Elementary School also should be pursued, with the unused asphalt area behind the school eventually developed with active recreational facilities. Ultimately, trail connections should be established between this park, Dunsmuir Ridge on the south, Dunsmuir House and Gardens on the west, and Knowland Park on the north.

Pinto/ Owen Jones. The park and playfield are both very visible and well-used, but would benefit from several physical improvements. These include relocation of the children's play area from the current hidden location to a more visible site, along with updating of the play equipment. The existing play area might be better used as a small, well-marked picnic area. Provision of some off-street parking would be helpful, as would better traffic control on Redwood Road (speeding traffic on Redwood Road presently creates a safety hazard for pedestrians using the park). Pinto would also benefit from new signage, as many local residents do not know the park's name.

The park is unique in that is located in one of the few residential growth areas of Oakland. A park impact fee would create a funding source for Pinto's expansion and improvement. The most cost-effective use of the funds might be to improve the connections between the park and Carl Munck School, providing a direct link between the park and the school's basketball courts and hardcourt play areas. Pinto should also be connected to nearby Leona Heights Park via a trail around Munck School and across Campus Drive.

Sheffield Village. The park has benefitted from pride of ownership by the close-knit Sheffield Village neighborhood. Still, a number of physical improvements are needed. These include:

- renovation and enlargement of the recreation center;

- replacement of the children's play apparatus with new, more interesting apparatus;
- lighting and resurfacing of the basketball courts;
- traffic safety improvements, including signs and speed humps on Marlow Drive and a fence and gate around the play area and day care center;
- a neighborhood kiosk and bulletin board;
- security lighting around the recreation center;
- trail access to San Leandro Creek and Lake Chabot; and
- A new shaded picnic and BBQ area.

Knowland. At 482 acres, Knowland is Oakland's largest park. It includes expansive conservation areas as well as the Oakland Zoo and arboretum. A Master Plan containing general principles for the park's development, as well as plans for specific capital improvements, was prepared in 1990.

The Knowland Master Plan divides the park into three physical units: (1) the historic park landscape and arboretum; (2) the zoological gardens; and (3) Wild California. Wild California includes a variety of western landscapes, including grassland, chaparral, oak woodland, and riparian canyons. Wildlife native to these habitat will be housed in this area.

The Plan calls for many improvements, including additional parking, major traffic circulation changes, improved park entry and picnic areas, a new west gate, an education building, an off-exhibit breeding center, a wild habitat preserve, a variety of "California 1820" exhibits and upgrades to existing exhibits. The total cost for these improvements is estimated at $17 million. A significant share of the funding is being provided through Measure K.

The master plan does not address the substantial portion of Knowland Park above the zoo and picnic grounds. This area is to remain in its natural state and be managed for resource conservation and fire hazard reduction. The area's unimproved hiking trails should be upgraded, marked, and used to link residential neighborhoods around the park, nearby open spaces such as Dunsmuir Ridge, and the regional parks on the east side of Skyline.

The relationship between Knowland Park and the South Hills community should be improved through better after-hours security at the park, introduction of neighborhood-oriented recreation programs, and clarification of park boundaries. City-owned land adjacent to the park along Golf Links Road should be merged with the park itself.

Dunsmuir House and Gardens. A master plan for this historic property was prepared in 1993. The Plan should guide the long-range use of the property and management of facilities. The basic character and integrity of the park will be maintained, with some of the historic buildings renovated and several new visitor-serving facilities added.

(Old) Chabot Observatory. The 6-acre site will become available for re-use after the existing observatory is relocated to Joaquin Miller Park. A master planning process is recommended to evaluate re-use options for the buildings and to redesign the park site. Continued use of the property for a recreational or educational use is recommended. Reuse of the site as an environmental education center or neighborhood park should be given serious consideration.

City Stables. Plans for the renovation and future operation of this 7.3-acre facility, recently acquired using Measure K funds, are now being developed. The site will remain an equestrian center, with a variety of new programs serving Oakland residents.

Skyline Ranch. This 5.5-acre horse stable site, located just outside the Oakland city limits, was acquired by the Regional Park District in 1993. Plans for its renovation and future operation are now being prepared. Like City Stables, it will remain an equestrian center.

Chabot Municipal Golf Course. Chabot has been Oakland's premier municipal golf course since 1923. Measure AA funds are presently being used to renovate the clubhouse. The golf course is likely to experience an increase in use now that Galbraith is closed, possibly increasing maintenance requirements. Although the course works fairly well at this time, consideration might be given to re-routing the access road at some point in the

future (to reduce hazards to motorists crossing the fairways).

Leona Open Space. Although this 300-acre open space preserve is one of Oakland's largest parks, it is very difficult to find and has very few recreational improvements. The EBRPD should be encouraged to prepare a land use and development plan for this park, addressing the following issues, among others:

- vegetation management;
- creek restoration, erosion control, and access;
- park expansion to include the west slope of Ridgemont subdivision (lands on either side of the Leona Quarry);
- trail improvements;
- signage, access, and parking improvement, and;
- provisions for picnicking.

Future use of Leona Open Space should reflect the scenic, natural character of the canyon and should focus on passive recreational activities like picnicking and hiking.

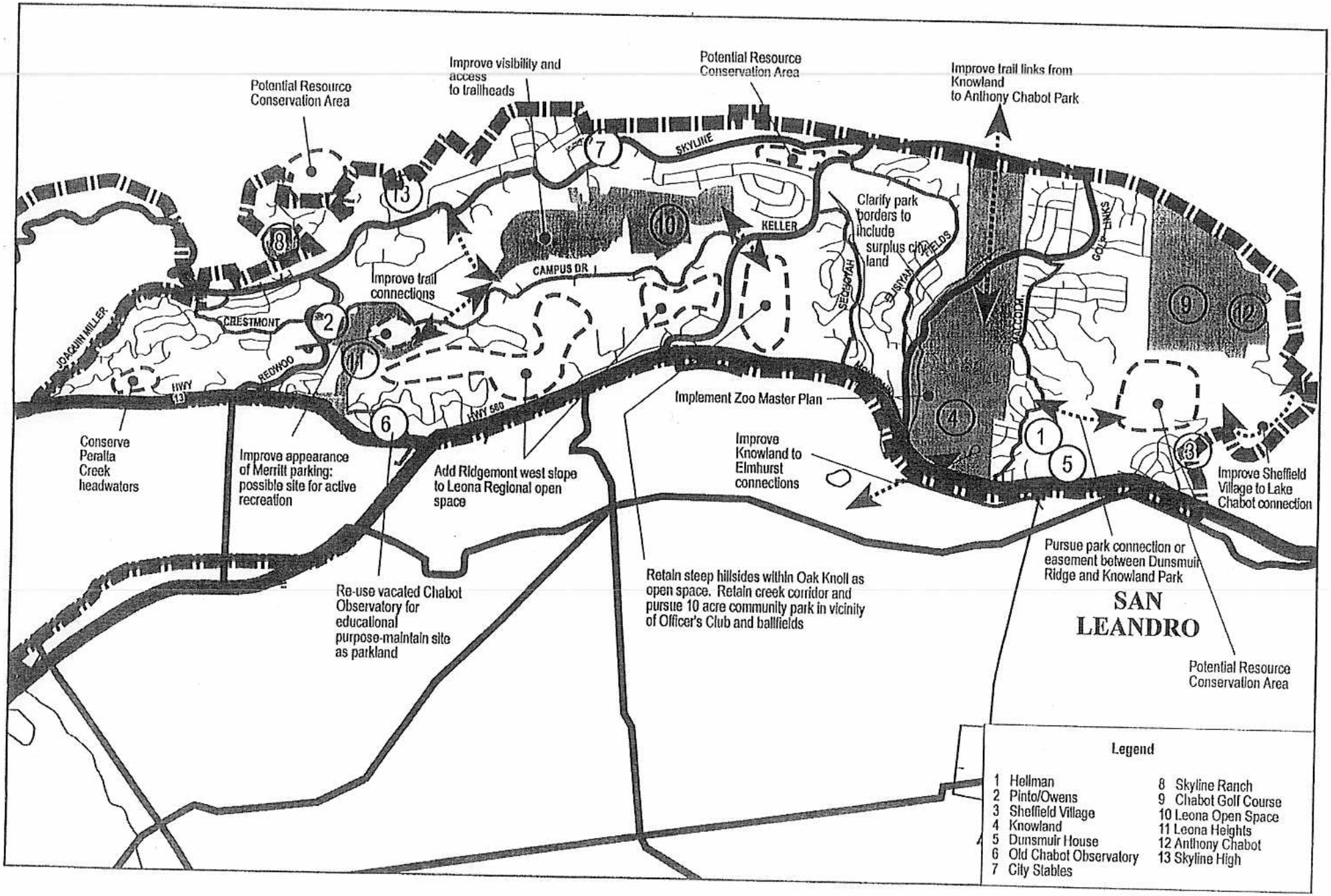
Leona Heights. This 50-acre conservation area would benefit from improved signage and public information, as well as better trail marking and maintenance. The site has a 100-year history as a family picnic spot and should continue to function in this capacity. Renovation of the lodge, upgrading of the picnic area, improvement of the parking area, and vegetation management within park boundaries would all be beneficial.

Before the Warren Freeway was built, Leona Heights included McCrea Park (the casting ponds) on the other side of the freeway. Ultimately, the two parks should be joined again (through an underpass or surface street connection) and the vacant area between Mountain Boulevard and the freeway should be improved. The area is flat, with good visibility and the potential for active recreation or special recreational uses.

Connections between the lodge area and other hill parks could also be improved. Steep, overgrown trails already exist, connecting the site to Merritt College, and then to Chabot Park via the York Trail and Leona Open Space. Trail maintenance, erosion control, trail markings are all needed, highlighting such historic features as Oakland's oldest (and largest) redwood tree and some of the city's early sulfur mines.

Chabot Regional Park. Small portions of this 5,000 acre regional park lie within Oakland's city limits. Trail maintenance, vegetation management (including maintenance of a ridgeline fire break), and habitat conservation are the major prescriptions for the Oakland portion of the park.

Skyline High Field. The athletic field provides the only spectator football field in the South Hills. Continued high levels of maintenance are recommended.



City of Oakland
Open Space, Conservation, & Recreation Element
Figure 29: South Hills Major Recomm tions
Source: Oakland Office of Planning ng, 1996

AIRPORT

The Airport Planning Area encompasses 2,620 acres and has no permanent population. The area includes a large region-serving park, a municipal golf course, several resource conservation areas, and three athletic field parks. These areas encompass 263 acres of recreational lands and 52 acres of conservation lands.

The Planning Area is completely flat and consists primarily of landfill and wetlands. About three-quarters of the area consists of open space, mostly due to the large amount of open land around the airport.

Figure 30 summarizes open space and park recommendations.

Open Space Recommendations

Access to most of the open space in the Airport Planning Area is restricted due to FAA regulations and operational requirements at Oakland Airport. However, the area does contain Martin Luther King Junior Regional Shoreline and Galbraith Golf Course, as well as a number of athletic fields. The area also contains most of Oakland's wetlands, including Arrowhead, Damon, and Fan Marshes, and large wetland areas within the airport boundaries.

The area is relatively close to Elmhurst and Central East Oakland, two areas with significant park deficiencies and limited access to the natural environment. As mentioned throughout the OSCAR Element, one of the challenges of the next two decades will be to improve access between these neighborhoods and the open spaces in the Airport Planning Area. To the extent permitted by law, specific recommendations are outlined below:

- ✓ Improve access to Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline, particularly the Curt Flood Field area near the end of 66th Avenue. Improvements could include a bike trail connection to the Coliseum neighborhoods in Central East Oakland, better signage and road improvements at Curt Flood Field, and transit access from the shoreline to nearby residential areas.
- ✓ Construct the Bay Trail along its adopted alignment through the Airport Planning Area. Construction should include an extension of the San Leandro Channel trail upstream to 98th Avenue (and possibly beyond), and a connection across Galbraith Golf Course to Oyster Bay Regional Shoreline. Trails along Elmhurst Slough in the Edgewater business park should be created as adjacent land develops.
- ✓ Protect Fan Marsh, possibly adding it to Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline.
- ✓ Encourage the Port to conserve the airport wetlands, but recognize that FAA concerns over bird strikes may restrict conservation activities.
- ✓ Explore new opportunities for passive recreation as the Airport Access Road is developed and the area around North Field is redeveloped. These might include landing/take-off viewing areas and dog walking/play areas. In addition, the existing North Field Aviation Museum should be encouraged to expand and be marketed to visitors.
- ✓ Create educational and ecological study opportunities in wetland areas, especially in locations like Fan Marsh which front on major thoroughfares (Doolittle Drive).

Park Recommendations

The special characteristics of this Planning Area have resulted in unique parks unlike those found in most other parts of the city. Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline, by far the largest shoreline park in Oakland, is a regional recreation area drawing patrons from throughout the East Bay. The park includes a shoreline trail, picnic areas, fishing areas, and a number of undisturbed marshes. Other parks in the area make the most of sites which are otherwise constrained by their proximity to Oakland Airport.

Specific recommendations for Airport area parks are laid out below. OSCAR Technical Report Volume 2

(Chapter 4) should be consulted for a comprehensive assessment of each park and more specific recommendations.

Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline. A new Land Use and Development Plan is needed for this region-serving park on San Leandro Bay. The EBRPD Plan has not been comprehensively updated since the park opened in 1979. The new Plan should look specifically at ways to make the park more useable to residents of Central East Oakland and Elmhurst. This could include additional recreational facilities on upland sites, interpretive nature facilities at the marshes, and access improvements (trails and bridges) within the park and between the park and nearby neighborhoods. Better visibility and access on the High Street side of the park could also improve its ability to serve San Antonio and Fruitvale.

A number of locations in the park are suitable for more intense use. These include the newly acquired area between East Creek Slough and the Tidewater Business Park as well as the Curt Flood Field area. The OSCAR Element provides guidance in the types of uses that would be appropriate on San Leandro Bay itself, and the ongoing management of the wetlands.

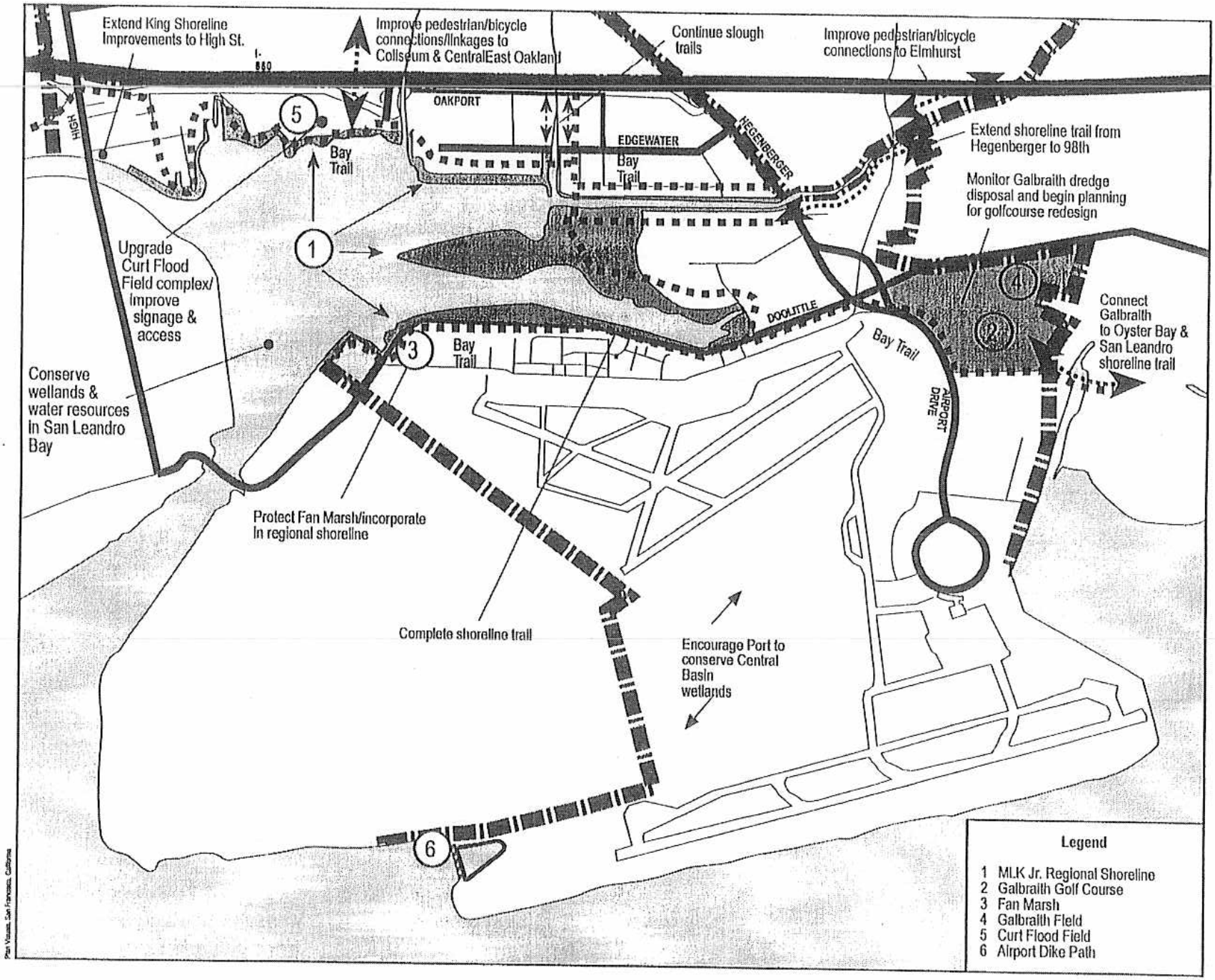
Galbraith Golf Course. The Golf Course will be closed for the next seven years to receive dredge spoils from the Oakland Estuary. The City and Port should work together in developing the design for a new 18-hole golf course on the site, taking advantage of the dredge materials to create a more challenging and attractive golf course.

Fan Marsh. This 7-acre wetland is currently within the Airport boundary. The site should be designated as a Resource Conservation Area and ultimately added to Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline.

Galbraith Field. This soccer field on Doolittle Drive has the potential for more intensive use. Its location in an non-residential area makes it a candidate site for night use, although lighting, bleacher, and parking improvements are needed first. Redesign of the golf course should include provisions to retain and upgrade the ballfield.

Curt Flood Field. Curt Flood requires access, signage, and parking improvements. While the facility is very close to underserved neighborhoods, it is very difficult to find and is underutilized.

Airport Dike Path. This small park within the boundaries of Oakland International Airport provides excellent views of departing aircraft and access to fishing and birdwatching areas.



City of Oakland
Open Space, Conservation, & Recreation Element
Figure 30: Airport Major Recommendations

HARBOR

The Harbor Planning Area encompasses 2,345 acres and has no permanent civilian population. The area includes transient military population at the Oakland Army Base and Fleet Industrial Supply Center, but they are served by their own park and recreational facilities. Non-military recreational areas in the Harbor are limited to three small parks with a total area of about 6 acres.

Virtually the entire Harbor area was formerly marshland or open water. Over the years, the area was filled for transportation and military uses, usually with no provisions made for recreation or waterfront access. As the Port has redeveloped its marine terminals, a handful of new access points have been created.

Figure 31 summarizes open space and park recommendations.

Open Space Recommendations

For the most part, the Harbor is a flat, sparsely vegetated area with very few natural features other than the Emeryville Crescent wetlands. The landscape is dominated by marine and trucking terminals, storage yards, military warehouses, and railyards. With more than 5 miles of shoreline and spectacular vistas of San Francisco and Oakland, the area offers some exciting park and open space opportunities. However, these opportunities must be balanced against the Harbor's key role in supporting local economic growth.

The Harbor will undergo major transitions during the next few decades. The new Cypress Freeway will be built along the eastern edge of the area. The Fleet Industrial Supply Center will be partially redeveloped, probably with port-related uses. The Army Base faces an uncertain future, but may also be a candidate for redevelopment. The railyards will be impacted by the Port's expansion plans. And ultimately, the older marine terminals may be replaced with new ones.

As this transition occurs, provisions should be made for new parks and public open spaces wherever feasible. Such uses can be designed to be compatible with, and even to enhance, the Port's economic development program in this area. Shoreline parks can reduce some of the parkland deficiency in nearby West and North Oakland and can create an amenity for all Oakland residents to enjoy. Specific opportunity sites are outlined in greater detail in the Shoreline and Creeks Section of OSCAR.

To the extent permitted by law, additional recommendations are outlined below:

- √ Designate and maintain the Emeryville Crescent wetlands as a Resource Conservation Area.
- √ Construct the Bay Trail and the spur trails along the adopted alignments through the Harbor area.
- √ Improve the eastbound Bay Bridge "gateway" to Oakland, possibly with a landscaped vista point just beyond the Oakland anchorage.
- √ Work with the Port of Oakland, the federal government, and the various Base Closure agencies to explore possibilities for shoreline access within the Fleet Industrial Supply Center. Possible use of the finger piers and boat basin for recreation should be explored.
- √ Should the Army Base become available for re-use, work with the Port of Oakland in exploring opportunities for access.
- √ Following redevelopment of the Fleet Industrial Supply Center, pursue development of a small historic shoreline park at the Union Point Mole (mouth of the Estuary).
- √ Create stronger links between the waterfront and West Oakland, beginning with the Bay Trail.
- √ Work with the Port of Oakland to establish visitor observation areas and promote public awareness of the economic importance of the Oakland shoreline.

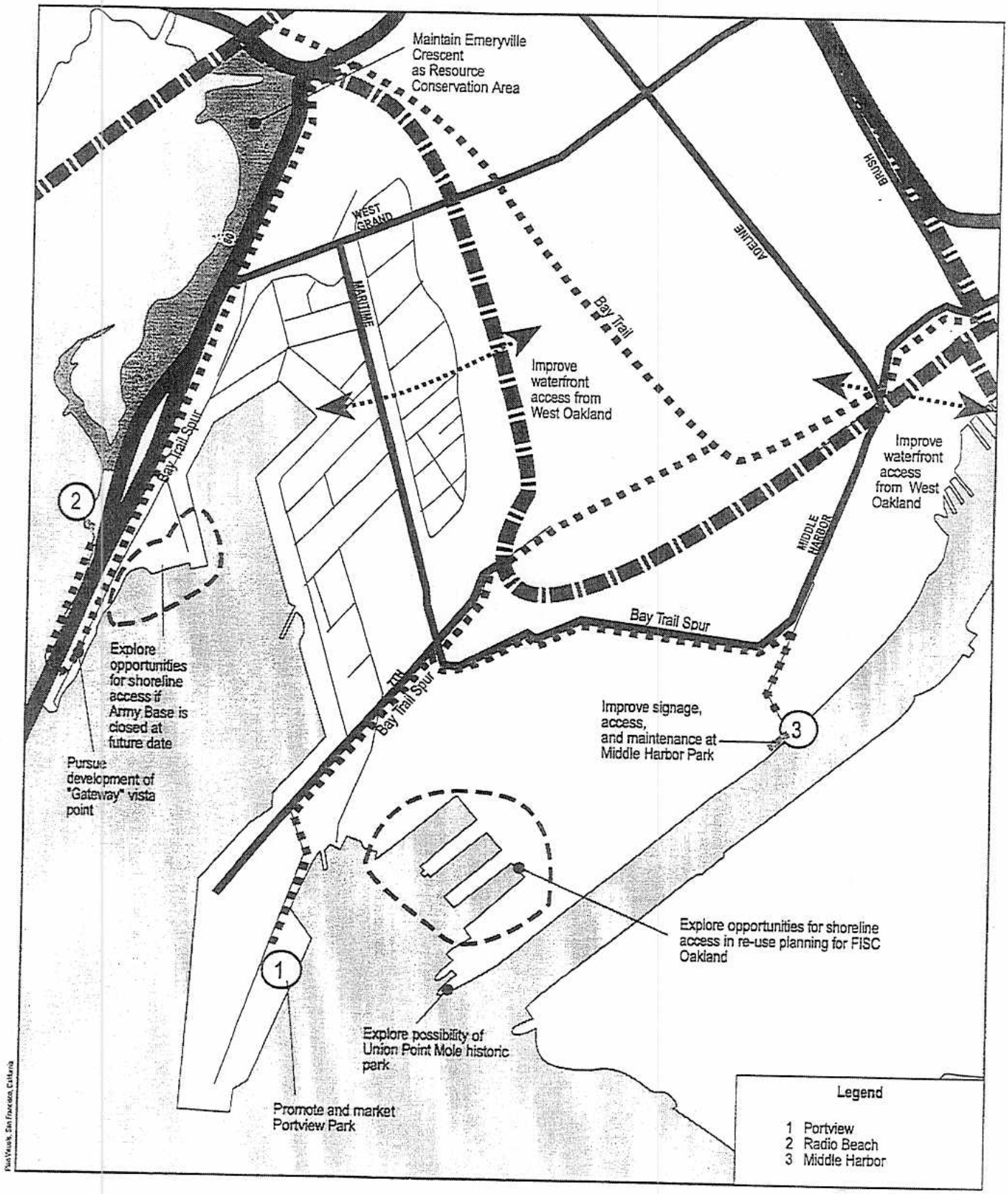
Park Recommendations

The Harbor area's three parks provide sites for waterfront access, fishing, and picnicking. They lack active recreational facilities and are remote from residential areas. Specific recommendations for Harbor area parks are laid out below. OSCAR Technical Report Volume 2 (Chapter 4) should be consulted for a comprehensive assessment of each park and more specific recommendations.

Portview (7th Street) Park. This park was relocated and rebuilt following its closure after the 1989 Earthquake. The new park includes a 2,200-foot promenade as well as fishing and picnicking facilities and a maritime museum. Due to its remote location, it will require excellent directional signs, extensive public information, and regular security to ensure that it is used to its full potential.

Radio Beach. This beach on the north side of the Bay Bridge toll plaza would benefit from an identification sign. Increased activity at the site would be difficult to accommodate due to traffic and access constraints.

Middle Harbor. Maintenance, signage, graffiti abatement, and access improvements are needed. Located at the end of a dead-end street in a shipping and industrial area, the park is difficult to find. It would benefit from either a new location or clearer directional signs.



1/4 Mile

City of Oakland
Open Space, Conservation, & Recreation Element
Figure 31: Harbor Major Recommendations
Source: Oakland Office of Planning & Building, 1995