

5 PARKS AND RECREATION ELEMENT

Public parks, and the passive and active recreation opportunities that they provide, are important contributions to the Eden Area's quality of life. Parks provide areas for outdoor recreation, a contrast to the highly urbanized environment, and access to natural beauty. Parks also provide a place for people to meet and a central location for socializing and community gatherings. In addition, recreation facilities provide educational opportunities.

Unfortunately, the Eden Area is underserved by park and recreation facilities, relative to nearby jurisdictions. The need for additional facilities and the ongoing repair and maintenance for existing sites were discussed during the General Plan process and established as a high priority for Alameda County. These needs are difficult to meet because the Eden Area is substantially built-out with limited opportunity sites for new parks or recreation facilities. Additionally, there are many constraints on capital funding sources to acquire land and improve park facilities.

The purpose of the Parks and Recreation Element is to ensure the comprehensive and long-range preservation and management of a wide range of parks and recreation facilities throughout the Eden Area.

A. Background Information

This section describes the funding provisions made available to Alameda County by the California Quimby Act and describes park and recreation facilities in the Eden Area. Parks and recreational opportunities are provided primarily by the Hayward Area Recreation & Park District and the East Bay Regional Park District. In addition, the Bay Trail offers Eden Area residents trail opportunities. Each of these is described briefly below.

1. California Quimby Act

The Quimby Act allows cities and counties to require a dedication of land, the payment of in-lieu fees, or a combination of both, from new development to be used for the provision of parks and recreational purposes. Cities and

counties can require land or in-lieu fees for a minimum of 3 acres per 1,000 residents resulting from new development, with the possibility of increasing the requirement to a maximum of 5 acres per 1,000 residents if the city or county already provides more than 3 acres per 1,000 residents.

On August 10, 2004, Alameda County adopted the Park Dedication Ordinance of Alameda County [Ordinance 2004-81 § 1 (part)], which established an in-lieu fee/land dedication requirement for residential development. The requirement was established to ensure that new development would pay its fair share for park and recreation facilities in the Unincorporated Area. Though the ordinance applies to the entire Unincorporated Area, fees or land dedications must be used for facilities which can reasonably be expected to serve the development being taxed. Land or money can only be used for local or community park and/or recreation facilities. Money may be used to acquire land or to make improvements but may not be used for maintenance, operations, or administrative costs. The in-lieu fee/land dedication requirement is not intended to bring the area up to a predetermined park acreage-to-population standard, but rather to maintain the existing level of service. All new development may not be impacted by this Ordinance in the same way. Alameda County based its in-lieu fee/land dedication requirement on a level of service of five acres of land per 1,000 persons.¹

2. Hayward Area Recreation & Park District²

The Hayward Area Recreation & Park District (HARD) is an independent special district providing park and recreation services for over 250,000 residents living within a 64 square-mile area which includes the unincorporated Eden Area communities of Ashland, Cherryland, San Lorenzo, Hayward Acres, and Fairview. It also serves the City of Hayward and the unincorporated community of Castro Valley.³ HARD operates and maintains 14 rec-

¹ http://www.co.alameda.ca.us/admin/admincode/Alameda_County_General_Ordinance_Code/Title_12/20/index.html.

² Review of and comments for this section were provided by Larry Lepore, Interim Parks Superintendent, HARD, February 2, 2005.

³ <http://hard.dst.ca.us/index.html>, accessed on January 26, 2005.

reational facilities covering 65 acres inside the Eden Area, almost all of which contains some type of open lawn area with picnic tables and/or play area. The locations, acreages and amenities of recreational facilities in the Eden Area are shown in Table 5-1 and Figure 5-1.

Recreational opportunities are often measured in terms of the combined standard of park acreage-to-population. In the Eden Area there are 66 acres of parkland, excluding the Hayward Regional Shoreline and sites maintained by schools. The 2000 population of the Eden Area was 60,076. Thus, the park acreage-to-population ratio in the Eden Area is 1.1 acre per 1,000 residents. By comparison, the park acreage-to-population ratio in Hayward is 2.5 acres per 1,000 residents; in San Leandro it is 2.6 acres per 1,000 residents.⁴

HARD endorses a combined standard for local, community and regional park acreage-to-population ratio of 10 acres per 1,000 population. This is on the high end of the National Recreation and Park Association's combined goal standard range of 6.25 to 10.5 acres per 1,000 population. HARD categorizes parks and recreational facilities as described below:⁵

◆ **Local Parks**

- **Definition** – Small- to medium-sized parks with basic recreational activities for one or more neighborhoods. Typical neighborhood park facilities may be included as part of a larger community park.
- **Service Area** – ½ to ¾ mile radius
- **Size** – Typically 3 to 10 acres
- **Acreage Standard** – 1.5 acres per 1,000 population



Playground in the Eden Area

⁴ Ratios were calculated based on the populations and park acreages published in each city's general plan. For Hayward, the park acreage-to-population ratio is taken from *City of Hayward General Policies Plan*, April 1995. For San Leandro the data was taken from *Public Review Draft San Leandro General Plan*, November 2001.

⁵ HARD *Master Plan*, HARD 1990, page 8. Definitions will be updated with the *Master Plan*, which is scheduled to be released December 2005.

◆ **Community Parks**

- **Definition** – Large parks with a mix of passive and active recreation areas that serve the entire Eden Area or a large portion of the HARD service area. A community park should include, but not be limited to, the facilities that are typically found at neighborhood and mini-parks.
- **Service Area** – Minimum 2-mile radius
- **Size** – Generally 15 - 20 acres
- **Acreage Standard** – 6 acres per 1,000 population

◆ **Regional Parks**

- **Definition** – A large park that serves the open space and recreation needs for all users of the Eden Area and the Planning Area. Regional parks primarily contain natural open spaces and passive recreation areas but may also contain some amount of active recreational facilities.
- **Service Area** – Entire HARD Area
- **Size** – Greater than 100 acres
- **Acreage Standard** – 2.5 acres per 1,000 population

◆ **Other Facilities**

- **Definition** – All other facilities maintained by HARD. These include community centers, aquatics centers, special use facilities and playfields.
- **Service Area** – As appropriate (community centers have a service area of 2 to 3 miles)
- **Size** – As appropriate (aquatics centers must be a minimum of 2 acres)
- **Acreage Standard** – 2.5 acres per 1,000 population

The majority of the parks in the Eden Area are classified as local parks. One park, San Lorenzo Park, is classified as a community park. There are no regional parks located in the Eden Area.

HARD also maintains parks adjacent to a number of schools in the Eden Area, including:

- ◆ Arroyo High School
- ◆ Bohannon Elementary School

TABLE 5-1 **EDEN AREA HARD RECREATION FACILITIES**

Facility	Sub-Area	Acres ^{a,b}	Type of Park ^c	Amenities ^d
Arroyo High School	San Lorenzo	1.0	L	swim center, open lawn area, P, R
Bohannon School	San Lorenzo	2.7	L	ball fields, soccer fields, open lawn area
Ashland Park	Ashland	1.2	L	picnic tables, BBQs, play area, community center building, meeting rooms, open lawn area, P, R
Cherryland Park	Cherryland	4.0	L	picnic tables, BBQs, play area, basketball courts, horseshoe courts, open lawn area, skate area, P, R
Del Rey Park	San Lorenzo	3.0	L	picnic tables, BBQs, play area, open lawn area, P
Edendale Park	Ashland	1.0	L	play area, open lawn area
Fairmont Linear Park	Ashland	1.2	L	picnic tables, BBQs, play area, open lawn area, P
Hesperian Park	Ashland	0.8	L	play area, open lawn area
McConaghy Park	San Lorenzo	3.1	L	picnic tables, BBQs, tennis courts, horseshoe courts, open lawn area, historical building, P, R ^e
Meek Park	Cherryland	9.8	L	picnic tables, group picnic area, BBQs, play area, open lawn area, historical building, P, R
Mervin Morris Park	San Lorenzo	4.7	L	picnic tables, BBQs, play area, tennis courts, open lawn area, skate area, P, R
San Lorenzo Park	San Lorenzo	31.0	C	picnic tables, BBQs, play area, hiking/riding trails, ball fields, basketball courts, soccer fields, community center building, snack bar, meeting rooms, open lawn area, par course, lagoon, P, R

Note: P = parking lot R = restrooms

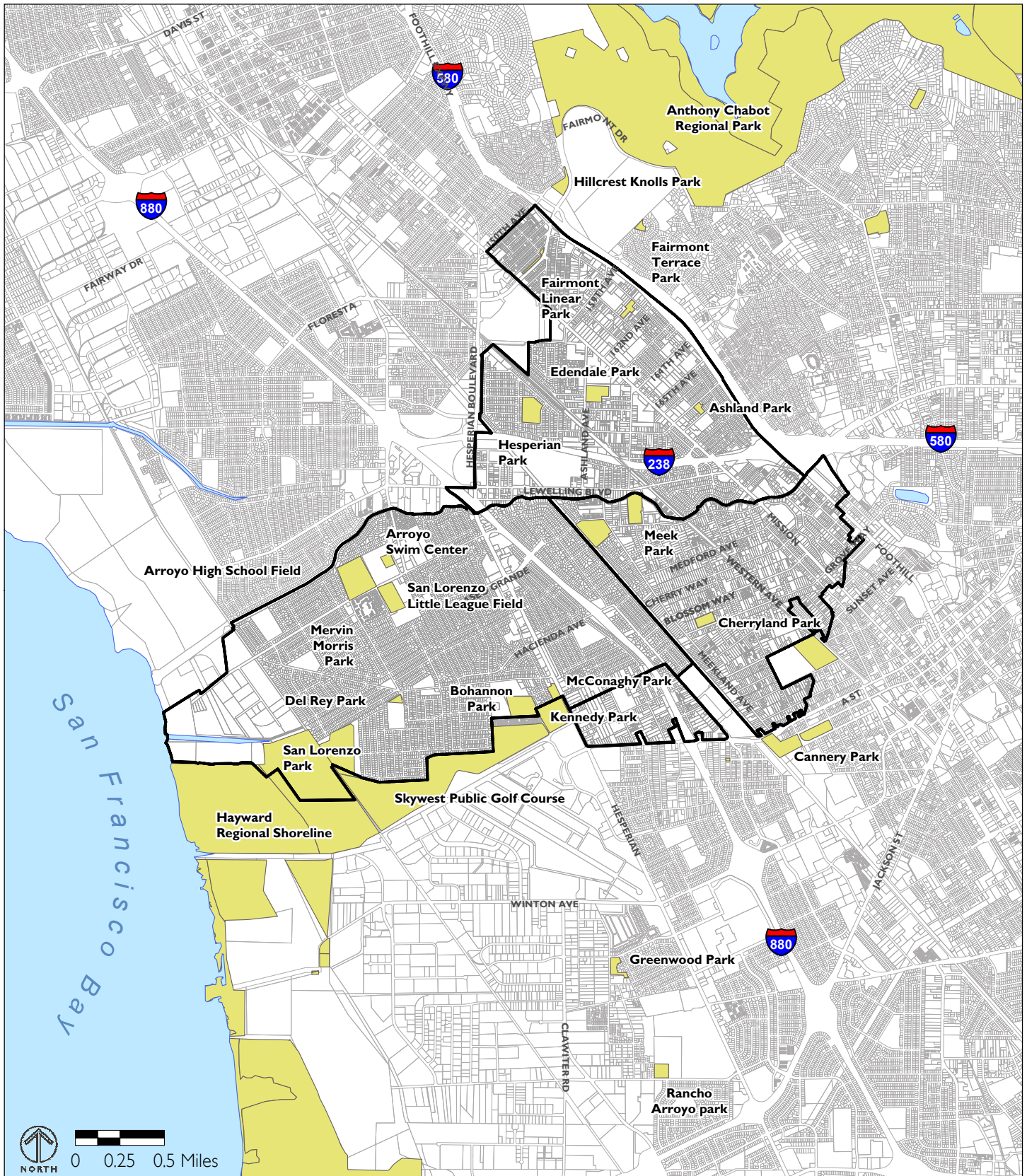
^a Personal communication with Eric Willyerd, HARD, February 12 and 26, 2003.

^b The acreages in this table reflect only the open space that HARD maintains. Acreages of school-maintained open space are not accounted for.

^c L equals a local park, C equals a community park and R equals a regional park.

^d HARD Facilities Directory (http://hard.dst.ca.us/fac_directory.html, accessed on Jan. 27, 2005).

^e Restrooms are located at Kennedy Park, which is next door.



Source: Hayward Area Recreational Park District Master Plan, East Bay Regional Park District Master Plan, and Alameda County Community Development Agency.

FIGURE 5-1

**PARKS AND OPEN SPACE
IN AND ADJACENT TO THE EDEN AREA**

- Parks and Open Space
- Study Area Boundary

- ◆ Colonial Acres Elementary School
- ◆ Edendale Middle School
- ◆ Hesperian Elementary School

At these facilities, HARD only maintains the portion of the school yard that is for public use. Each respective school, under the direction of the San Lorenzo Unified School District (SLZUSD), maintains the portions of the schoolyard not maintained by HARD. The portion of the area that is maintained by the school is open to the public for use during non-school hours, with the permission of SLZUSD, although some individuals or organizations may be charged a fee depending on the proposed use of the facilities. SLZUSD does not keep records of the acreage of open space located on the school properties. Additionally, there are recreational spaces at Colonial Acres School in Cherryland, which contains a play area, and at San Lorenzo High School, which contains ball fields and soccer fields. HARD does not maintain these facilities.

HARD also operates an extensive community and recreation program serving all ages throughout the 100 facilities in its service area. HARD's programming includes classes in many areas including art, aquatics, dance, drama, photography, golf, gymnastics, martial arts, tennis, soccer and naturalist activities. However, community recreation programs at facilities located inside the Eden Area are very limited. Ashland Park and Community Center, and the San Lorenzo Community Park are the two recreational facilities in the Eden Area that offer HARD programming, including:

- ◆ Senior Health Screening
- ◆ Social Bridge Group
- ◆ ESL Classes
- ◆ After School Programs
- ◆ Teen Programs
- ◆ Martial Arts Classes
- ◆ Exercise Classes



Del Rey Park in San Lorenzo

Additionally, in the After School Playground Program, supervised activities are held at various local community centers and school sites for youth ages 6 to 12 years old, Monday through Friday, when school is in session.

Many of the facilities in the Eden Area have been upgraded or replaced in recent years. Improvements include replacement of all playgrounds, upgrades to all sports fields, installation of new skateboard facilities, a renovation of the Meek Estate building and restoration of the surrounding park and new programming at the Ashland Community Center. HARD completed an update to its *Master Plan* in June 2006.

3. East Bay Regional Park District

The Eden Area is also served by two regional parks operated by the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD): Hayward Regional Shoreline Park, and Anthony Chabot Regional Park and Lake Chabot. Portions of Hayward Regional Shoreline Park fall within the Eden Area's planning boundaries. Both of these parks provide various recreational, interpretive, natural and scenic opportunities. Each is discussed below:

- ◆ **Hayward Regional Shoreline Park.** The 1,682-acre Hayward Regional Shoreline park is located along the San Francisco Bay. The regional shoreline provides significant recreational, interpretive, natural and scenic values. This park includes the Bay Trail (described below) and can be accessed from Grant or West Winton Avenues. Some of the natural resources of the park include special bird, animal and plant species, historic features, bay open water tidelands, bay marsh wetlands, and fresh marsh wetlands.
- ◆ **Anthony Chabot Regional Park and Lake Chabot Regional Park.** Anthony Chabot Regional Park and Lake Chabot Regional Park are accessible from Fairmont Drive. These two adjoining parks make up the southern boundary of the regional chain of parks that stretches, in an almost continuous swath, north from the Eden Area all the way to Richmond. This park is adjacent to the Fairmont Campus at the northern edge of the Eden Area. Amenities at the park include:

- ◆ Multi-use trails
- ◆ Open lawn areas
- ◆ Equestrian-related amenities
- ◆ Campgrounds
- ◆ Fishing
- ◆ Boating
- ◆ Picnic areas
- ◆ Marksmanship range

The 1997 EBRPD Master Plan does not include plans for additional regional open space in the Eden Area. However, there is a three-acre portion of the shoreline located in the Eden Area. The property is owned by the Oro Loma Sanitary District, which operates the San Lorenzo Sewage Treatment plant. This site is being considered by the County as a potential opportunity site for an additional park resource should it become available for purchase. It is a unique recreational opportunity that could be enhanced by improved connections to the Eden Area.

4. The Bay Trail

The Bay Trail, which is being planned and developed by the Association of Bay Area Governments, is a recreational corridor that, when complete, will encircle San Francisco and San Pablo Bays with a continuous 400-mile network of bicycling and hiking trails. It will connect the shoreline of all nine Bay Area counties, link 47 cities, and cross the major toll bridges in the region. To date, approximately 240 miles of the alignment—over half the Bay Trail’s ultimate length—have been completed. The Bay Trail is maintained by HARD and the EBRPD.

In the Eden Area, the Bay Trail runs along the undeveloped western edge of Grant Avenue Industrial Area immediately adjacent to San Francisco Bay. A trail head and parking lot are located near the western terminus of Grant Avenue. This trail head is a spur trail that connects to the larger Bay Trail. To the south of the Eden Area the Bay Trail connects to the Hayward Re-



Meek Park

gional Shoreline.⁶ The approach to the trail runs along a circuitous route that uses portions of a Pacific, Gas & Electric access road and a fire road to meet up with the maintained trail on the north side of the San Lorenzo Creek channel. There are currently no plans to improve the connection.

5. Adjacent Park Facilities

There are a number of park facilities located in the City of Hayward but which are adjacent to the Eden Area and thus accessible for Eden Area residents. These facilities include:

- ◆ **Greenwood Park** is a 3-acre neighborhood park located at Eden Avenue and Middle Lane.
- ◆ **Cannery Park** is a 7½ -acre neighborhood park located on 'B' Street just south of the Cherryland sub-area.
- ◆ **Kennedy Park** is a 13-acre community park located on Hesperian Boulevard, adjacent to the Hayward Acres and San Lorenzo sub-areas.
- ◆ **Rancho Arroyo Park** is a 4-acre school park located on Depot Road.
- ◆ **Skywest Golf Course** is a par 72, 18-hole championship golf course adjacent to the San Lorenzo sub-area.

In addition to these facilities, there are many parks within the cities of Hayward and San Leandro that are slightly further from the Eden Area but that are still accessible to Eden Area residents.

B. Goals, Policies and Actions

Goal PR-1	Improve the quality of life in the Eden Area through the maintenance and improvement of parks and recreation facilities.
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⁶ Bay Trail website, maintained by the Association of Bay Area Governments. <http://baytrail.abag.ca.gov/overview.html>.

Policies

- P1. A full range of parks and recreational facilities should be provided for Eden Area residents of all ages and physical capabilities.
- P2. Parks in the Eden Area should be regularly maintained and enhanced, as funding is available, to ensure continued public use and enjoyment, enhance public safety and prevent deterioration. Priorities set by the public for improvements to existing parks include the following:
- ◆ Community centers at Hesperian Park, Edendale Park and Meek Park.
 - ◆ Athletic fields at Edendale Park.
 - ◆ Tennis and/or basketball courts at Ashland Park.
 - ◆ Dog park at Cherryland Park.
 - ◆ Playgrounds at Ashland Park.
 - ◆ Picnic and barbeque facilities at Ashland Park and Edendale Park.
- P3. Park facilities in the Eden Area should maintain a balance between active and passive recreation and should ensure that the park system benefits a diverse range of interest groups.
- P4. The County, working with HARD, shall strive to achieve a combined park acreage-to-population ratio of five acres per 1,000 population for local and community parks in the Eden Area.
- P5. The County shall work with HARD to locate a park that is accessible to every Eden Area resident by foot or transit.

- P6. The County shall work with HARD to identify sufficient, appropriately-located land to meet the park standards identified in HARD's parks Master Plan.
- P7. New and rehabilitated parks in the Eden Area shall comply with the requirements and standards in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- P8. Existing recreational programs shall be maintained and enhanced to the greatest extent feasible.
- P9. All park and recreation lands shall, to the greatest extent feasible, be dedicated and held inviolate in perpetuity, protected by law against diversion to non-recreational purposes and against invasion by inappropriate uses. Exceptions to this policy may be made in the interest of acquiring additional park land or recreation facilities.

Actions

- A1. Conduct regular community outreach with residents, neighborhood associations, and similar groups to solicit public input on park needs.

Goal PR-2 Develop new parks and recreational facilities in the Eden Area to meet existing deficiencies.

Policies

- P1. Work with HARD to identify strategic locations for new or expanded parks in the Eden Area. Several potential future park sites have been identified through the General Plan process and are listed below:

- ◆ A new park at the former Holland Oil Site on the west side of East 14th Street and north of Kent Avenue.
 - ◆ The expansion of Mervyn Morris Park to include the Little League fields leased by the San Lorenzo Village Homes Association and two privately-owned parcels along Nielson Avenue.
 - ◆ The expansion of Kennedy Park on land behind the Bohannon School on Bockman Road.
- P2. Given limited land availability, the County shall work with HARD to establish highly programmed recreation centers.
- P3. Priorities for new park and recreational facilities should include: community centers, playgrounds, swimming pools, dog parks, athletic fields, a gymnasium, picnic sites and a skate park.
- P4. Require new development to pay an impact fee or dedicate parkland at five acres of parks per 1,000 population to offset the increase in park needs resulting from new residents to the greatest extent allowed by law.
- P5. In-lieu park fees shall be maintained at levels that reflect true costs of land acquisition and park development costs.
- P6. New parks dedicated through the development process shall be improved by the project sponsor and ownership shall be transferred to HARD.
- P7. New parks and recreation facilities shall be designed to maximize usable open space, avoid conflicts with adjacent neighborhoods and provide direct pedestrian and bicycle access between homes and parks.

- P8. To the extent feasible, new investments in parks should be focused on neighborhoods that are the least served in terms of park access and variety of recreational amenities.
- P9. To the greatest extent feasible, new neighborhood and community parks should be located in predominantly residential areas.
- P10. The inclusion of publicly-accessible parks, plazas, courtyards, landscaped commons and other open spaces shall be pursued within new commercial, industrial and public facility development projects.
- P11. The development of privately owned and operated recreation facilities, such as skating rinks, bowling alleys, and batting cages, should be encouraged so long as such facilities are compatible with surrounding uses and consistent with community goals.
- P12. When it is determined that a school is to be closed and that the facility will not be required in the future, the reuse of the property for park, recreation and community facilities should be the highest priority.
- P13. To the extent feasible, when a water retention basin is required for development, the retention basin shall be designed to serve as a usable green space such as a playfield.

Actions

- A1. Maintain the County's park in-lieu fee at a level that reflects current costs and needs and addresses park needs generated by infill development. The park in-lieu fee shall be updated, at a minimum, every two years.

- A2. Pursue diverse funding for park improvements including development impact fees, development agreements, the redevelopment agency, private donations and federal and state grants.

Goal PR-3 Pursue the joint use of public facilities for recreational purposes.

Policies

- P1. The County, working with HARD, shall promote joint use agreements with school districts and other public agencies to maximize public access to all public spaces and grounds during non-business or school hours.
- P2. The County shall work with the school districts to develop creative solutions to maintenance, liability, security and funding challenges associated with the joint use of school properties for public recreation.
- P3. The County shall work with the school districts to implement design changes that allow school grounds to function as parks and recreational facilities.

Actions

- A1. Work with the surrounding school districts, EBMUD and other public agencies to expand, create and maintain new joint use facilities and agreements.

Goal PR-4 Create a comprehensive network of multi-use trails and linear park facilities within and through the Eden Area.

Policies

- P1. The County shall pursue the conversion of underutilized rail corridors and spurs in the Eden Area into multi-use trails.
- P2. The County shall improve access to the Bay Trail from the Grant Avenue Area. Such activities should include, at a minimum, increased parking, visible signage, restrooms and improved trail information.
- P3. Trails in the Eden Area should have adequate pedestrian amenities including benches, tables, restrooms and lighting.
- P4. The County should pursue opportunities to increase access from all parts of the Eden Area to the EBRPD trail system, the Hayward Regional Shoreline and Chabot Regional Park. These opportunities include improved trailheads that serve Eden Area residents, improved access from within the Eden Area and enhanced signage.
- P5. Support the ongoing effort to create a multi-use trail along the BART right-of-way. This trail should include paved paths, landscaping and lighting to encourage walking and biking, enhance the visual appearance and ensure public safety. Design of the multi-use path should address privacy, noise and nuisance issues for adjacent residents.

Actions

- A1. Work with EBRPD, the Association of Bay Area Governments, East Bay Municipal Utilities District, HARD, Alameda County Flood Control and any other appropriate agency to enhance access to and facilities near and within the Bay Trail and the Hayward Regional Shore-

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line. Improvements should include additional signage, expanded parking facilities and pedestrian amenities such as benches, trash cans and restrooms.

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