

An aerial photograph of a city block, likely in West Oakland, showing a mix of multi-story residential buildings and green spaces. The right half of the image is obscured by a large, semi-transparent green overlay. The text is overlaid on this green area.

WEST OAKLAND SPECIFIC PLAN Final Plan

9. Open Space

June 2014



9: Open Space

In a relatively densely developed urban community such as West Oakland, urban open spaces include not only the traditionally understood system of city parks, but also includes other less-traditional outdoor spaces that contribute to the physical, social and economic health of the community.

This section of the Specific Plan examines the urban open spaces which exist in West Oakland today, and the types of urban spaces recommended to better support the overall growth of the West Oakland community. It incorporates previous City parks and open space planning efforts, current plans and ideas of others, as well as presents new, individual urban open space design recommendations, such as incorporating new urban green spaces as part of new development projects.

URBAN OPEN SPACE TYPES¹

Several types of urban open spaces exist in West Oakland today. They include waterfronts, public parks, squares and plazas, streets, paths and linear parks, schoolyards, and urban farms community open spaces and outdoor markets.

Waterfront

The West Oakland waterfront includes open space along a portion of San Francisco Bay, providing public access to the water’s edge and waterfront parks.

Much of West Oakland’s Bay waterfront is not publically accessible because it is actively used for Port operations. However, the San Francisco Bay Trail traverses West Oakland, extending from Jack London Square to Emeryville via 2nd Street, 3rd Street and Mandela Parkway. The Bay Trail and its spur trails connect to Middle Harbor Park and PortView Park along 8th Street, 7th Street and Middle Harbor Road within the Port of Oakland, providing access to the Bay waterfront (see **Figure 9.1**).

Public Parks

Public parks are publicly developed and managed open spaces that are part of the City’s open space system. Traditionally, such parks include grass and trees located in traditional or historic centers, often including playgrounds and sports facilities, community centers, and places for active and passive recreation. Small urban parks, often bounded by buildings, may also include fountains, water features or other attractions.

¹ Adapted from “A Typology of Urban Open Spaces,” (Carr, Francis, Rivlin and Carr, 1992)

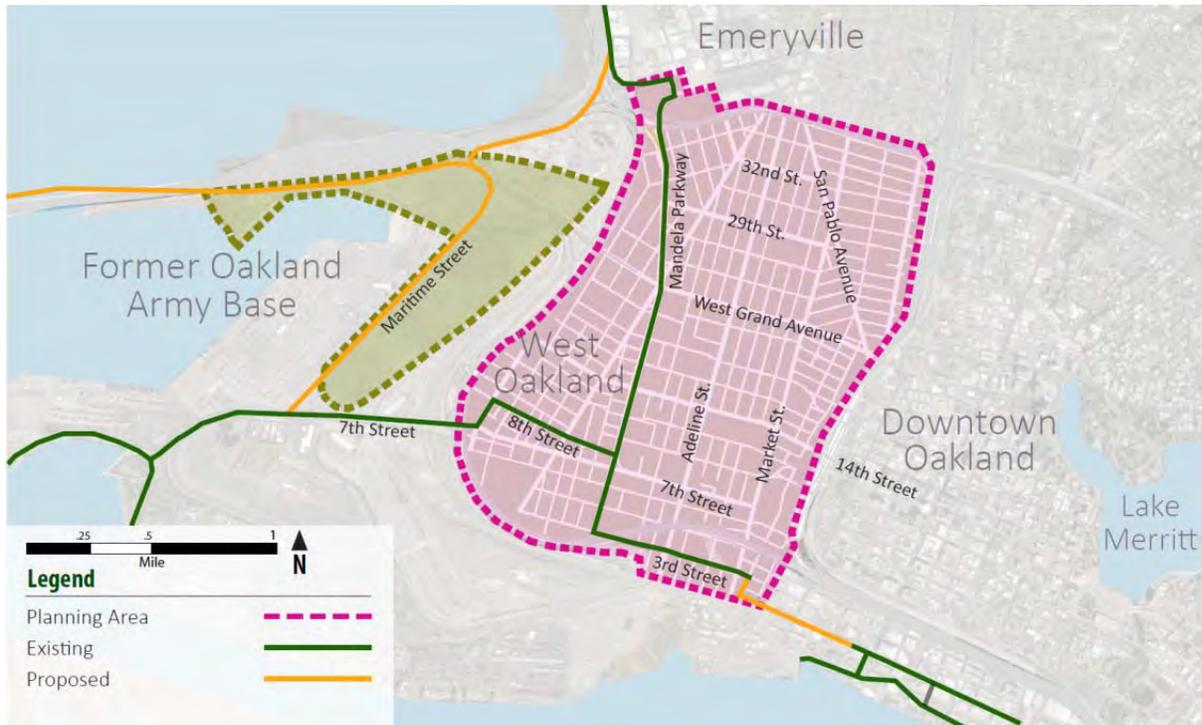


Fig. 9.1: Bay Trail within Planning Area

Public parks and community facilities that are located within West Oakland (see **Figure 9.2**), include:

1. De Fremery Park
2. Lowell Park
3. Wade Johnson Park
4. Raimondi Park
5. Willow Park
6. Marston Campbell Park
7. South Prescott Park
8. Fitzgerald/Union Plaza
9. Saint Andrews Plaza
10. Brush Park
11. Willie Keyes Community Center
12. Poplar Park
13. West Oakland Library
14. West Oakland Senior Center
15. Cypress Freeway Memorial Park
16. Bertha Port Park
17. Mandela Parkway

Public schools (see Figure 7.4.1 in Chapter 7) include:

1. McClymonds High School
2. Ralph Bunche High School

3. The Kipp Bridge Academy
4. Hoover Elementary
5. Cole Elementary
6. Prescott Elementary
7. Lafayette Elementary
8. Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary
9. Foster Elementary

Park Services

City of Oakland Parks and Recreation Department (OPR) also operates several community recreation centers that offer sports, arts and crafts, culture arts and dance, computer labs, drama, mentoring, general learning, and afterschool activities. Recreation centers in West Oakland include De Fremery Recreation Center, West Oakland Senior Center, and Willie Keyes Community Center.

Fig. 9.2: Public Parks & Facilities



Parkland Standards

The City of Oakland General Plan establishes a citywide level of service goal of 4 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents for parks that meet the active recreational needs of the community. City-wide, Oakland only provides approximately 1.33 acres of local-serving parks per 1,000 residents, falling short of the General Plan parkland goal. According to the City of Oakland General Plan Open Space, Conservation and Recreation (OSCAR) Element, West Oakland has 56.70 acres of parkland (including schoolyards and athletic fields), which equates to 2.43 acres of parkland per 1,000 West Oakland residents, or about 60% of the General Plan parkland level of service goal. Thus, West Oakland is below the citywide level of service goal for parkland vis-à-vis its current population, but exceeds the city-wide average of parkland per population.

Squares and Plazas

Squares or plazas are often part of a City's historic development pattern, either formally planned or existing as a meeting place of streets. Many squares or plazas include memorials of important local people or events, or are established in areas where people tend to gather, such as major transit stops and station locations.

West Oakland contains many places considered squares or plazas. Examples include the West Oakland BART station which has a large pedestrian surface area outside of the station where people congregate and pass through on their way to catch a BART train. Along San Pablo Avenue, there are many triangular-shaped parcels formed by the diagonal intersecting street system. These triangular parcels function as both improved and unimproved squares where people may tend to gather.

Streets, Paths, and Linear Parks

Streets, which comprise the greatest portion of Oakland's public space, can be an important component in the urban open space system

when they are designed to incorporate green vegetation, adequate space for bicycles, pedestrian amenities, and interesting spaces. Streets and sidewalks can also be planned as the setting for environmental learning, designed and marked as trails of exploration. Linear parks and off-street paths which interconnect recreational and natural areas by pedestrian and bicycle paths are also part of this type of urban open space.

Throughout West Oakland, the character and open space value of the public street right-of-way varies widely. Many of West Oakland's residential neighborhoods have tree-lined roads with ample sidewalks and nicely landscaped yards. Mandela Parkway is designed with a generous linear park in the middle of the street and a tree-lined center walking path that extends through the heart of West Oakland. Some other corridors have planted medians, while others have individual planting pockets for trees. Based on a 2006 citywide sidewalk survey, West Oakland has an estimated 3,650 street trees which provide approximately 31 acres of tree canopy cover.²

Many other streets in West Oakland, especially those in the more industrial Opportunity Areas, have no sidewalks or sidewalks so narrow that adding street trees is not possible without making structural changes to provide sufficient planting space. Many of these streets have badly deteriorated pavement conditions, dense arrays of overhead wires, and virtually no pedestrian appeal or open space value.

Schoolyards

Schoolyards generally exist as play areas specifically for schoolchildren, and may or may not be accessible as open space for general community use.

Within West Oakland there are five elementary schools, three middle schools and one high school owned and operated by the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) (see also Figure 7.4.1):

² West Oakland Reforestation Plan

High School

- McClymonds High School at 2607 Myrtle Street, is a full-sized public high school

Middle Schools

- Ralph Bunche Middle School at 1240 18th Street
- Cole Middle School at 1011 Union Street (originally an elementary school, is currently an administrative facility and the headquarters of the OUSD police unit)
- Lowell Middle School at 991 14th Street (also houses the West Oakland Middle School and Kipp Bridge Charter Academy)

Elementary Schools

- Foster Elementary School at 2850 West Street (not presently used as a school and contains OUSD administrative functions).
- Hoover Elementary School at 890 Brockhurst Street
- Lafayette Elementary School at 1700 Market Street
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School at 960 10th Street
- Prescott Elementary School at 920 Campbell Street (now known as Preparatory Literary Academy of Cultural Excellence)

Each of these school facilities currently contains a schoolyard, though not all are available for public use.

Urban Farms, Community Open Spaces and Outdoor Markets

These informal open space areas include community gardens and other neighborhood spaces typically designed, developed and managed by local residents, often on vacant land. These spaces are typically not viewed as part of the city’s public open space system, and are often vulnerable to displacement due to land development projects. Similarly, West Oakland has outdoor markets (often streets) used for farmer’s markets or “pop-up” festivals, often temporary or occurring only during certain times, mostly in existing space used for other purposes.

There are a growing number of community gardens and urban farms in West Oakland. City Slicker Farms, a non-profit organization based in West Oakland, operates seven Community Market Farms (spaces open to the public), as well as a weekly Farm Stand, a greenhouse, Urban Farming Education programs, and over 100 backyard gardens. City Slicker Farms, in partnership with the City of Oakland Parks and Recreation Department (OPR), is constructing a new market farm at Fitzgerald Park and Union Plaza. City Slicker Farms was also recently awarded a \$4 million Proposition 84 grant for a “West Oakland Park and Urban Farm” project, to purchase a vacant lot at 28th Street and Peralta Streets and construct a farm and public open space.

CONCURRENT URBAN OPEN SPACE PLANNING EFFORTS

One of the purposes of the West Oakland Specific Plan is to provide a consolidated list of information related to development of the Plan Area, derived from numerous planning efforts both prior to and concurrent with preparation of this document. The intent is to acknowledge the value of these other efforts and incorporate them where applicable into this Plan’s recommendations. In that spirit, the following includes a short summary and major highlights of key urban open space planning efforts:

- The West Oakland Reforestation Plan,
- Gateway Park proposal,
- ADAPT Oakland, and
- West Oakland Walk.

These efforts were initiated by other parties independent of the Specific Plan, yet are important components of West Oakland’s potential future urban open spaces.

West Oakland Reforestation Plan ³

Trees and other landscaping add to the health and aesthetics of Oakland's neighborhoods. Individuals and community organizations consistently seek the means to soften West Oakland's hard edges through tree-planting projects. Currently, the process is ad-hoc, with property owners encouraged to work with the City's Tree Services Division when choosing and planting street trees, but there is no overall plan that takes into account the horticultural and aesthetic "big picture".

The West Oakland Reforestation Plan provides this 'big picture' as well as specific examples of how this picture can be individually implemented. The Reforestation Plan envisions a thriving sustainable urban forest encompassing West Oakland's streets, parks, other publicly owned facilities and private properties, composed of a wide spectrum of trees, shrubs, ground cover, and other vegetation that enhances environmental quality, community health, and social equity. To help achieve this vision, the Reforestation Plan provides mechanisms for improving West Oakland's landscaping and appearance by increasing the extent and quality of the tree population and other vegetation in West Oakland.

Reforestation Plan Objectives

The objectives of the Reforestation Plan are to:

- Expand the City's current list of 30 street tree species to promote a healthier, more diverse urban forest and to broaden the range of trees available for the wide range of environmental conditions and design constraints within both West Oakland and the City as a whole.

- Designate species for West Oakland's major streets to help unify and provide a distinct character for each of these streets.
- Assess the benefits and costs for a large-scale tree planting and stewardship program in West Oakland.
- Provide specific tree planting recommendations for parks, schools, parking lots and other public and private open spaces.
- Devise strategies for achieving active community participation in tree planting and maintenance.
- Design a pilot planting project that will begin implementation of the Plan provisions.

The West Oakland Reforestation Plan includes a number of key findings and recommendations with particular relevance to this Specific Plan (see **Figures 9.3 and 9.4**).

³ The West Oakland Reforestation Plan has been prepared for the City of Oakland by PGA Design with H.T. Harvey Associates under contract to the West Oakland Green Initiative (WOGI), a private nonprofit tree advocacy organization representing West Oakland residents and businesspeople, in partnership with other tree advocacy organizations, the City of Oakland, the Port of Oakland and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Fig. 9.3: West Oakland Reforestation Plan Survey Results



Map courtesy of PGAdesign inc.

Fig. 9.4: Non-Street Tree Planting Opportunities



Map courtesy of PGAdesign inc.

Some of these key findings and recommendations include:

- **Environmental Benefits:** Increasing the size of Oakland’s urban forest can help meet goals for reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and stormwater run-off, particularly if the increase in canopy coverage is accomplished by planting a diverse selection of low water-use, drought-tolerant trees that maximize stormwater interception, air pollution removal, carbon storage, and carbon sequestration.
- **Specific Air Quality Benefits:** Expanding West Oakland’s urban forest can help improve air quality by reducing air temperature, directly removing pollutants from the air, and reducing energy consumption in buildings, which has the added benefit of reducing air pollutant emissions from power plants. Studies have shown that increases in tree cover can reduce ozone formation. Air pollution removal is greatest for ozone, followed by particulate matter less than ten microns, nitrogen dioxide, and sulfur dioxide. It is estimated that West Oakland’s existing street trees remove more than a half-ton of air pollutants per year.
- **Economic Benefits:** It is possible to inventory, analyze and quantify (i.e., put a dollar value on) the annual environmental and esthetic benefits of trees through energy conservation, air quality improvement, carbon dioxide reduction, stormwater control, and property value increases. The potential net economic benefit to West Oakland that could be realized by planting a mix of as many as 113,210 street trees, trees in parks and public open spaces, and trees at private businesses and residences is estimated to be as much as \$6.7 million.⁴
- **Need for Comprehensive Forest Management:** A critical component of successfully meeting environmental goals is comprehensive urban forest management

⁴ West Oakland Reforestation Plan

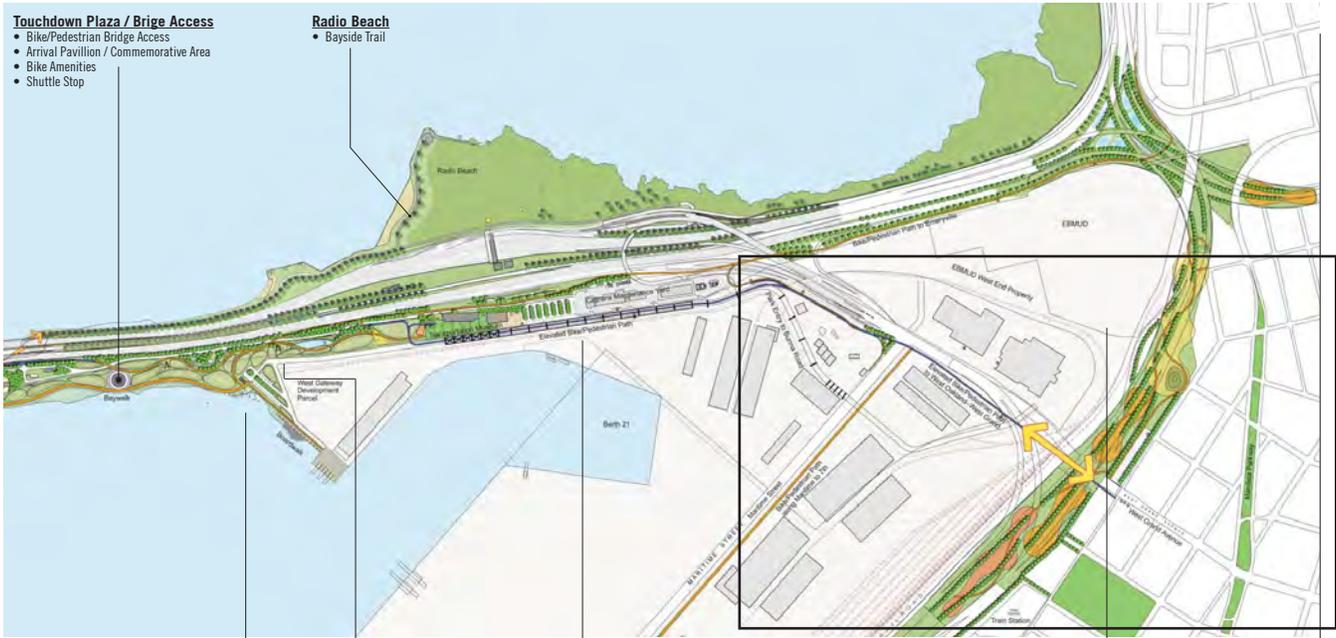
that promotes the proper planting of new trees and the long-term maintenance of existing and newly planted trees. The optimum number of new trees for West Oakland is dependent on the City’s ability to maintain its urban forest so that trees can reach maturity and attain their potential for providing valuable environmental benefits.

Gateway Park⁵

Gateway Park is being planned by a host of public agencies as a proposed 170 -acre waterfront park at the foot of the new east span of the Bay Bridge, building upon the pedestrian and bicycle access being incorporated into the new bridge. Gateway Park will provide a unique waterfront amenity (see **Figure 9.5**). It is envisioned to provide active and passive recreational opportunities, a venue for community events and art displays, and a variety of features to showcase the natural, maritime, industrial and transportation history of the East Bay. It would also provide access to existing and planned segments of the San Francisco Bay Trails effort previously mentioned in this chapter.

⁵ Gateway Park is being planned by the Gateway Park Working Group, an alliance of nine local, regional, and state agencies that includes the City of Oakland and the Port of Oakland, led by the consulting firm of Perkins & Will.

Fig. 9.5: Gateway Park Proposal



- Touchdown Plaza / Brige Access**
- Bike/Pedestrian Bridge Access
 - Arrival Pavilion / Commemorative Area
 - Bike Amenities
 - Shuttle Stop

- Radio Beach**
- Bayside Trail

- The Point and Baywalk**
- Native Planting
 - Bayside Trails and Overlooks
 - Seating and Picnic Areas
 - Interpretive/Environmental Center, Artist Studios at Historic Buildings
 - Lookout/Fishing Pier
 - View of Old East Span Bridge Footings
 - Rebuilt Shoreline
 - Underpass to Radio Beach
 - Kayak Launch
 - Restrooms
 - Shuttle Stops
 - EBRPD Maintenance Yard

- Boardwalk**
- Port View
 - Boardwalk
 - Picnic Tables
 - Public Art
 - Repurposed Containers: Plantings, Public Art, Food Trucks
 - Observation Platform/ Repurposed Cranes at Boardwalk
 - Terminus
 - Parking for 110 Cars
 - Shuttle Stop

- Park Central / Museum**
- Transportation Museum at Historic IERBYS + New Building
 - Bridge Artifacts, including 504 Bridge Section
 - Museum Garden
 - Children's Play Area
 - Monumental Industrial Public Art
 - Artist Studios
 - Retention Pond
 - Elevated Bicycle/Pedestrian Path along Burma Road
 - Restrooms (in Museum)
 - Parking for 150 Cars
 - Passenger Loading, Drop-Off and Tour Bus Layover
 - Shuttle Stop

- Park Entry**
- Park Entry Road from Maritime Street, with Bridge Artifacts
 - Elevated Bike/Pedestrian Path along West Grand Avenue to/from West Oakland
 - Bike/Pedestrian Path along Maritime Street
 - Bike/Pedestrian Path to/from Emeryville

The preliminary design of Gateway Park is subdivided into six areas, each hosting a range of amenities, such as:

- A new bicycle path along West Grand Avenue extending from Mandela Parkway and eventually leading through the former Army Base area;
- Display area for historic trains;
- Outdoor Yard event space;
- Visitor Center;
- Play Areas for children, teens and adults;
- Kayak launch;
- View rides such as an elevated zip line, ropes course or other activities;
- Boardwalks with observation and picnic areas;
- Provisions for a temporary food area such as food trucks and carts;
- Shoreline protection measures;
- Restoration planting and habitat enhancement;
- Ecological interpretive signage along the trails and beaches.

The Park is also proposed to include an overflow parking lot with 300 parking spaces in proximity to the I-80/I-880/I-580 freeway structures. ..

The Gateway Park concept is generally consistent with principles of this Plan. It would provide additional open space resource for the community and would create another West Oakland amenity that could attract new development.

ADAPT Oakland ⁶

The Adapt Oakland project seeks new opportunities to provide for ecological designs and planning strategies that better integrate West Oakland with the redevelopment plans

⁶ Adapt Oakland is a separate planning effort being conducted by the firm Urban Biofilter, under an Urban Greening Planning Grant from the State Office of Planning and the Strategic Growth Council.

for the Oakland Global Trade and Logistics Center at the former Oakland Army Base. It also includes a community organizing campaign to support and vet these design and planning strategies.

Specifically, the Adapt Oakland project seeks to incorporate innovative green infrastructure standards into City development policy, and to establish a pilot program to evaluate data, define methods and develop a set of planning tools useful for other West Oakland applications.

Adapt Oakland is specifically focused on the freeway area between the Port and West Oakland and explores the potential for creating a dense urban forest at the edge of the industrial zone between West Oakland neighborhoods and the Port. The goals of the Adapt Oakland project are to utilize this urban forest to inhibit the movement of polluted air; mitigate contamination; reduce dust, fumes and noise; and to provide an aesthetically pleasing edge along the neighborhood. The vegetative barrier is intended to absorb greenhouse gasses, mitigate heat island effects; encourage bike and pedestrian activity; and provide an effective and sustainable solution for stormwater management.

West Oakland Walk ⁷

The *West Oakland Walk* is an urban design concept intended to leverage existing city assets into a “social circuit” for walking, biking, organic gardening, exercising and socializing, all activities that build sustainable communities (see **Appendix D**).

The West Oakland Walk would knit together the parks and public places of Central and West Oakland by improving a 4.5 mile loop of existing city streets and sidewalks into an urban greenway, running East – West from Lake Merritt at the center of the city to Central

⁷ Project description and graphic information for The West Oakland Walk provided by Philip Banta, AIA with Norman Hooks, AIA, copyright BETA, Inc.

Station (16th Street Train Station area) at its western edge. Along this greenway loop are 23 parks, the downtown, many of the city's most significant historic buildings, four BART stops and seven freeway entrances and exits. The parks, the building and the streets exist now, so there is no significant capital investment needed for this idea to take shape. The West Oakland Walk (W.O.W.) is a "found" design that is intended to help transform the way people see and use Oakland by capitalizing on the unification of substantial in-place public and private infrastructure with a single large-scale geometric stroke.

The Parks Map of the West Oakland Walk (see **Figure 9.6**) identifies the most visible public open spaces that touch the Walk or are within its orbit. These spaces include:

- improved multi-sport athletic fields at the 10-acre Ernie Raimondi Park,
- the swimming pool and tennis courts of the 9.5-acre De Fremery Park,
- the baseball diamonds of the 8.75-acre Lowell Park,
- the connection to the Bay Trail along the richly landscaped Mandela Parkway linear park,
- the Frank H. Ogawa Plaza at the heart of Oakland's civic center,
- the numerous recreational and botanical options of the 75-acre Lakeside Park encompassing the historic Lake Merritt and its wildlife sanctuary,
- the children's Fairyland, Splash Park and the Bonsai and garden center Japanese gardens, and
- the majestic trees and putting green of the 4.2-acre Snow Park.

Within the vicinity of the West Oakland Walk are the original five squares of Oakland - Lafayette, Jefferson, Lincoln, Madison, and Harrison (the Chinese Garden Park) - in addition to Peralta Park that connects to the Oakland Estuary Park. This extraordinary collection of open spaces, providing both passive and active recreational activities represent the "green

living rooms" of the city of Oakland. (See Appendix D for other WOW elements).

Implementation of the West Oakland Walk

The Walk could be implemented in phases, as funding becomes available through application to regional, State and National public and private grants. The levels of improvements would include the following:

1. Sidewalk, curb, and storm drain repair where necessary.
2. Light standard announcement banners, identifying the West Oakland Walk Route.
3. Change-out of bulbs at light standards to an LED color special to the Walk.
4. Implement an AC Transit Bus Route following the West Oakland Walk.
5. Extend bike lanes or bike share lanes along length of route (14th St. is already designated as a bike route certified by a prior EIR).
6. Install planned landscaping and tree planting designed to unify the W.O.W.
7. Install special bus stop shelters along the walk designed to display historical information and biographies of the community. Equip shelters with LED information screens.
8. Create a cyber-history of persons and places related to the W.O.W. communities accessible by smart phone, tablet or computer and triggered by GPS location. In addition create an inter-active digital map for access to parks, public buildings, shopping, restaurants, and resources related to the W.O.W.
9. Construct street/sidewalk improvements specific to the W.O.W. (bulb-outs, cross-walk enhancements, common paving, street furniture: benches, trash receptacles, light standard replacements, upgraded traffic signals, directional signage for related places and parks along the W.O.W.).

10. Build an active “health circuit” by providing stations for bicycle storage, bicycle sharing and rental, for joggers and walkers, for par-course enthusiasts, and special facilities for sufferers of asthma and other community specific illnesses.
11. Plan, Design and Construct major programmed improvements at available open space locations within the Park network. Solar supported, climate responsive improvements may include community meeting porches, homework labs, outdoor and indoor theatre venues, community multi-purpose spaces, and garden support facilities.

Fig. 9.6: West Oakland Walk Parks

Raimondi Park



Mandela Pkwy



DeFremery Park



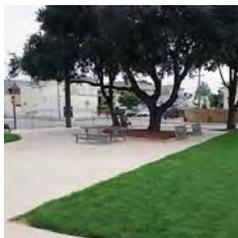
Marston Campbell



Frank Ogawa Plaza



Snow Park



Central Station

Willow Park

Memorial Park

Wade Johnson

Bertha Port Park

Lowell Park

South Prescott

Lafayette Square

Jefferson Square

Lincoln Square



Map courtesy of Phillip Banta

Fairy Land



Lakeside Park



Splash Pad Park



Lake Merritt



Peralta Park



parks

West Oakland Walk

by Philip Banta, AIA with Norman Hooks, AIA
©Beta, Inc.



Harrison Square



Estuary Park



Madison Square

URBAN OPEN SPACE RECOMMENDATIONS

West Oakland Walk

Intent: Work with the creators of the West Oakland Walk concept to specifically assess what physical improvements are needed and how to best communicate and market the idea.

Walk-1: Enlist the support and collaboration of local historians, community-based civic organizations, community garden advocates, and others to identify specific locations and places of interest that could/should be featured along such a walk.

Walk-2: Collaborate with the City Public Works staff to identify any specific sidewalk improvements, ramps and other improvements necessary to make the looped trail convenient and accessible.

Walk-3: Determine the best strategy for promoting and publicizing the Walk concept (e.g., printed and/or on-line maps, ground-breaking events, in the news, etc.).

Urban Open Space as Part of New Development

Intent: New, larger-scale private development projects pursuant to this Specific Plan should incorporate urban open space into the fabric of West Oakland. The open space elements of new development projects should be predominantly outdoors and inviting to the public; lively gathering spaces, providing abundant and varied seating, sun and shade, trees and plantings with attractions and features that offer many different ways for visitors to enjoy the space; used intensively on a daily basis, and act as a destination for a broad spectrum of users throughout the year; have a positive economic impact on its surroundings; and promote physical, social, and economic health of the larger community.

Urban Open Space-1: New, large-scale development projects should include publically accessible courtyards as part of their overall development plan.

- Courtyards should be designed to maximize exposure to the street front (i.e., not be hidden behind buildings or parking lots).
- Courtyards should include people-attracting elements such as water features and public art.
- Pedestrian connections through the courtyards should provide interconnections between on-site building entrances and exists.

Urban Open Space-2: New large-scale commercial development should include public gathering places and landscaped areas as part of their overall development.

- Retail entrances at key locations within large-scale developments should be indicated by open space entries, potentially including seating areas, trees and pedestrian plazas.
- Internal and abutting streets should include streetscape open space

potentially including wide, landscaped planting strips, bulb-outs for tree wells, and parking areas that have landscaped visual buffers along their external edge and planting islands within.

These recommendations are conceptually illustrated on **Figure 9.7**.

Urban Open Space-3: Portions of the former AMCO Chemical/DC Metals site at 1414 3rd Street near the West Oakland BART Station should be considered for use as an open space buffer adjacent to the South Prescott neighborhood. Such an open space buffer would need to accommodate the anticipated long-term hazardous materials clean-up actions and potential development limitations necessary at the site, facilitate groundwater cleanup, provide a cap for known lead present within the soil, help reduce air pollution from nearby I-880 freeway traffic, and provide an aesthetic screen around the site (See **Figure 9.8** for conceptual visualization of potential for bamboo forest on this location).

Urban Open Space -4: New development at the West Oakland BART Station TOD should include prominent pedestrian walkways, plazas and squares, especially near the entrances and exits to the BART station. The plazas and squares should have direct pedestrian connections to significant new commercial development sites (especially new retail and arts establishments), should be well lit to promote safe activity into the evenings, and be generously sized to accommodate and promote pedestrian activity mixed with multiple forms of transit and other transportation.

Open Space-5: The current relatively un-used space under the overhead BART tracks should be considered for use as public space and outdoor extensions of retail activity along 7th Street. Farmer’s markets, “pop-up” arts spaces and other creative public uses could be accommodated within this portion of the right-of-way.

These recommendations are conceptually illustrated on **Figure 9.9**.

Open Space-6: The smaller triangular parcels along San Pablo Avenue formed by the diagonal intersection of the street pattern (especially St. Andrews Plaza) should be improved, beautified and incorporated into neighborhood gathering places when funding opportunities become available.

- These areas should be heavily landscaped, planted with appropriate new trees (see West Oakland Reforestation Plan) and well light at evenings and at night to reduce incidences of crime.
- Businesses along the San Pablo Avenue corridor should consider establishment of a Business Improvement Districts (BID) or other similar merchants association to “adopt” these spaces and provide for their long-term maintenance and upkeep.

These recommendations are conceptually illustrated on **Figure 9.10**.

Urban Open Space-7: Although the 3rd Street Opportunity Area is envisioned as more industrial in character, there is an excellent opportunity to utilize the Linden Street right-of-way (on either a permanent or temporary basis) as a public outdoor space. This area could include arts fairs and sales booths, outdoor seating, eating and drinking places, and public art displays.

These recommendations are conceptually illustrated on **Figure 9.11**.



Fig. 9.7: Recommended Typical Urban Open Space

- Includes water features and public art
- Includes seating areas, trees, landscaped plazas



Fig. 9.8: Bamboo Forest Connecting 5th & Center Streets to Mandela Parkway & 3rd Street

- Interim or possibly permanent open space
- Open space buffer between BART TOD and South Prescott
- Benefits an environmentally-challenged site



Fig. 9.9: 7th St. Public Activity Area (At Peralta Street)

- Activate unused space beneath BART tracks
- Enlarges retail activity along 7th Street
- Supports markets, “pop-up,” and other creative public uses



Fig. 9.10: San Pablo and West Grand Avenues

( 23rd Potential Street Closure)

- Improved open space with landscaping and lighting



Fig. 9.11: Street Fair at Linden & 3rd Streets

- Temporary or permanent public outdoor space at Linden Street between 3rd Street and rail right of way

City Parks Improvements

Intent: Continue the renovation of public parks in West Oakland that provide recreational opportunities for local citizens, especially for children and youth.

Ernie Raimondi Park

Raimondi Park is one of the most heavily used parks in the city of Oakland. An overall concept plan for the park was developed by the Friends of Raimondi Park (FORP), with input from the community and the City. The concept plan includes renovated fields, a track, infrastructure improvements (including drainage), field lighting, bleachers, tot lots, golf putting green and a community picnic area. Because of lack of funds to develop the entire park at one time, the concept plan is to be implemented in phases.

FORP secured substantial private funding for the design and renovation of Raimondi Park which, together with other funding sources, were used to implement the first phase of the concept plan (including a new baseball diamond, a new synthetic-turf multi-purpose field, some field lighting, curb, gutter and sidewalk improvements along 18th Street, and community amenities). In September, 2007, groundbreaking ceremonies were held to mark Phase I of the Ernie Raimondi Park Renovation.

City Parks-1: Raimondi Park, Subsequent Phases: Pursue additional funding sources to further implement subsequent phases of the Raimondi Park concept plan.

- Additional improvements planned at Raimondi Park include a second multi-purpose field and additional infrastructure upgrades, park amenities, tot lots, picnic tables, benches, barbeques, bleachers, additional lighting and landscape improvements. Public Art should also be incorporated into the project.

De Fremery Park

De Fremery Park was the home to the USO for African Americans during World War II. The De

Fremery House, the large Victorian building within the park, is a recreation center also regularly rented out for community and private events. Many festivals take place in De Fremery Park each year, including the McClymonds Alumni Picnic in late September, the Black Cowboy Parade and the Life Is Living festival in October – all of which draw thousands of participants.

The park’s historic grounds have been recently renovated and the Friends of De Fremery Park and numerous other volunteers have participated in significant park cleanup effort. These efforts were “part of a much larger project seeking to enhance the park’s features and to recruit long-term supporters to maintain the park over time.”⁸

City Parks-2: De Fremery Park, subsequent Phases. Pursue additional funding sources to implement subsequent phases remaining in the multi-pronged De Fremery Park improvements project, including improvements to the picnic areas, lead abatement and new painting of the De Fremery House, and the installation of an edible garden.

St. Andrews Plaza

St. Andrews Plaza is a shady triangle-shaped plaza that is a respite spot to many homeless and needy in the area. The small park, situated just off the Avenue is across from the St. Mary’s Center, which adopted the park under the City Keep Oakland Beautiful program.

In recognition of the problems of violence and environmental degradation in their community (particularly at this small plaza), concerned citizens of Oakland’s west side have formed the San Pablo Corridor Coalition, a partnership of multiple neighborhood groups undertaking projects to benefit the community. One of those projects is the development and beautification of the area around San Pablo Avenue at 32nd Street and, specifically, St. Andrews’ Plaza.

⁸ City Councilmember Lynette McElhaneey

City Parks-3: St. Andrews Plaza Beautification:

Seek additional sources of public funding to support the San Pablo Corridor Coalition’s efforts to clean-up and beautify St. Andrews Plaza.

Lowell Park

Lowell Park at 1180 14th Street is another major West Oakland open space resource. Its strategic location on the 14th Street corridor - a major entryway into West Oakland from the city’s downtown area - provides high visibility. It is one of the largest and most used parks in West Oakland.

City Parks-4: Lowell Park: Seek additional sources of public funding to enhance Lowell Park in consideration of its prominence in the West Oakland neighborhood.

West Oakland Reforestation Plan

Intent: Implement the West Oakland Reforestation Plan, and in particular, the specific recommendations from the Reforestation Plan listed below, with the intent of developing a thriving sustainable urban forest encompassing West Oakland’s streets, parks, other publicly owned facilities and private properties.

The West Oakland Reforestation Plan includes detailed, site specific recommendations for new tree plantings, an analysis of the environmental and economic benefits that would accrue from such additional tree plantings, and a discussion of implementation challenges and suggested implementation strategies. The following recommendations and strategies are most important to supporting the development objectives of the Specific Plan.

Reforestation-1: New Sidewalk Trees: Support and pursue implementation of the Reforestation Plan’s recommendations for additional plantings of quality trees along each of twelve major streets identified in that Plan and listed below. The Reforestation Plan includes a detailed list of locations where additional trees can be planted, estimates of the quantity of trees

that can be planted at each location, and recommendations for specific tree species that should be used, briefly summarized below:

3rd Street

3rd Street is already heavily planted, with few places to add additional trees, but the dominant tree species are small trees that have little visual impact on this wide street. Narrow sidewalks and heavy truck traffic make it challenging to plant large trees that are needed here.

- When funding is available, reconfigure the 3rd Street sidewalk to add sufficient space for large trees.

7th Street

There are very few trees planted on 7th Street and no species that is clearly dominant.

- Plant new trees to match those trees planted in 2011 and 2012 between Union and Henry Streets as part of the 7th Street Improvement Project.
- Where space allows and drainage is good, plant large evergreens.
- Maintain and continue to plant trees in the medians that match the existing species.
- Plant additional small trees beneath the BART overhead structure west of the station.

12th Street (between Brush Street and Union Street)

There is ample room on 12th Street to add many large trees west of Market Street at Marston Campbell School.

- Plant trees that continue the existing dominant trees.
- Add more trees at Lowell Park that will contrast with the existing Live Oaks.
- Add large trees in the large planting island between Brush and Market Streets.

14th Street

Most of 14th Street is well planted.

- At Myrtle, add trees on the south side of the street to match the existing.
- At Union on the south side of the street, gradually replace the existing Australian Willow with larger trees.
- At Myrtle, add large trees to the median.

27th Street

There is an opportunity to create a gateway at the east end of 27th Street by planting on both sides of the street in existing planting areas.

- When funding is available, the sidewalks should be reconfigured to provide good sized planting areas for street trees.
- At West near the Olivet Building, plant additional trees between the existing trees that are spaced further apart than necessary.
- Add one more tree in between Northgate and Martin Luther King. Elsewhere the medians have sufficient numbers of trees.
- Develop a strategy and detailed plans for accommodating large trees on 27th Street. Plan to provide 3' wide by 5' long minimum planting pits.

40th Street

There are few street trees on 40th Street.

- Where feasible, plant large trees back of sidewalk within the 10' right-of-way or in parking lane.
- The median Redwoods on 40th Street are generally performing well. The Giant Sequoias are diseased and should be replaced as they continue to decline.
- Where space allows, continue to plant Redwoods and add small accent trees.
- Develop a strategy and detailed plans for accommodating large trees on 40th Street. Plan to provide 3' wide by 5' long minimum planting pits.

Adeline Street

Except in a few locations, Adeline Street has very few street trees. There is a large variety of species found along the street with no

dominant species, except London Plane in a few places.

- Divide the street into segments. Each segment to be planted with one or two species only.
- When funding is available, add medians along Adeline Street and plant median trees.
- Develop a strategy and detailed plans for accommodating large trees on Adeline Street. Plan to provide 3' wide by 5' long minimum planting pits.

Market Street

There are many blocks on Market Street that have no or very few street trees. This is a very wide street so it needs large trees and expansion of the existing median. There is a large variety of existing species with no dominant tree.

- Market is a long street so should be divided into segments and planted with more than one species.
- If new or replacement median trees are needed, continue to match the existing median tree species.
- Develop a strategy and detailed plans for accommodating large trees on Market Street. Design to provide 3' wide by 5' long minimum planting pits.

Mandela Parkway

- Replacement plantings on Mandela Parkway should match those designated on the plans prepared by Caltrans in 2003. Any additional plantings should also draw from the plant list on these documents. The intent is to maintain the original design concept for Mandela Parkway as implemented.

Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard

- New sidewalk trees and median trees on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard should be planted and maintained.

San Pablo Avenue

- Plant the same combination of species along the entire length of San Pablo

Avenue to help unify the Oakland and Emeryville portions.

- Continue to match the existing median tree species

West Grand Avenue

- Near Adeline there is room to plant 3 additional trees on West Grand Avenue to match existing.
- Near Union infill empty tree wells and add trees on the north side of West Grand Avenue.
- Near Poplar some of the existing ash trees on West Grand Avenue have bad form and should be replaced.
- Plant additional trees on West Grand Avenue near Mandela and the Pacific Pipe site.
- Add one tree on the south side of the street east of Mandela to match the existing.
- Add tall trees in the median of West Grand Avenue at Mandela Parkway.
- Develop a strategy and detailed plans for accommodating large trees on West Grand Avenue. Plan to provide 3' wide by 5' long minimum planting pits.

West MacArthur Boulevard

- Many new street trees have been planted recently on West MacArthur Boulevard, and there remain few places to add trees.
- If existing trees fail on West MacArthur Boulevard, they should be replaced with species that match the remaining nearby trees.
- When funding is available, add a median east of Market Street on West MacArthur Boulevard and plant with new trees.
- Add existing maples to the existing medians on West MacArthur Boulevard, wherever space allows.
- When funding is available, add a median island at Apgar on West MacArthur Boulevard and plant with Red Maple.

- Develop a strategy and detailed plans for accommodating large trees on West MacArthur Blvd. Design to provide 3' wide by 5' long minimum planting pits.

Reforestation-2: Other Tree Planting Locations:

Support and pursue implementation of the Reforestation Plan's recommendations for additional plantings of quality trees in public spaces such as city parks and library sites, but also other locations that are on private property (i.e., church parking lots, child care facilities, commercial properties and vacant lots. A windshield survey was done to identify places where additional trees can be planted, in addition to street tree plantings in sidewalks.

- The Reforestation Plan includes a detailed list of locations where additional trees can be planted, estimates of the quantity of trees that can be planted at each location, and recommendations for specific tree species that should be used.
- Proceeding with planting at any of the private property locations will require obtaining owner permission to do so.

Reforestation-3: Pending restoration of

sufficient City staffing, several strategies should be pursued to help compensate for the lack of City resources. Challenges to implementing the Reforestation Plan include the initial cost of planting trees, and the ongoing expense of monitoring and maintaining the trees and infrastructure (i.e., sidewalk, curb and gutter, utilities).

- Rely on nonprofit organizations to assume, at least temporarily, more responsibility for maintenance of City trees. Such maintenance would be in cooperation with City staff and conform to City requirements. This approach has been used successfully by San Francisco's Friends of the Urban Forest and in other communities.
- Seek tree planting and maintenance grants through State and federal government and privately-funded programs. Such grants are currently offered to nonprofit tree advocacy

organizations through the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the U.S. Forest Service and other sources. Urban ReLeaf, the West Oakland Green Initiative, and other Oakland-based nonprofit tree organizations have been very successful in obtaining these grants. The entities offering the grants recognize the deficiencies in Oakland's urban forest and are very supportive of efforts to improve it.

- Recruit neighborhood volunteers to help maintain trees. This approach would help promote community commitment and knowledge toward keeping trees healthy and well-maintained. These activities would be supervised by City staff or by persons from outside organizations with qualifications approved by the City.